THE WORLD'S CRISIS

In the Light of Prophecy

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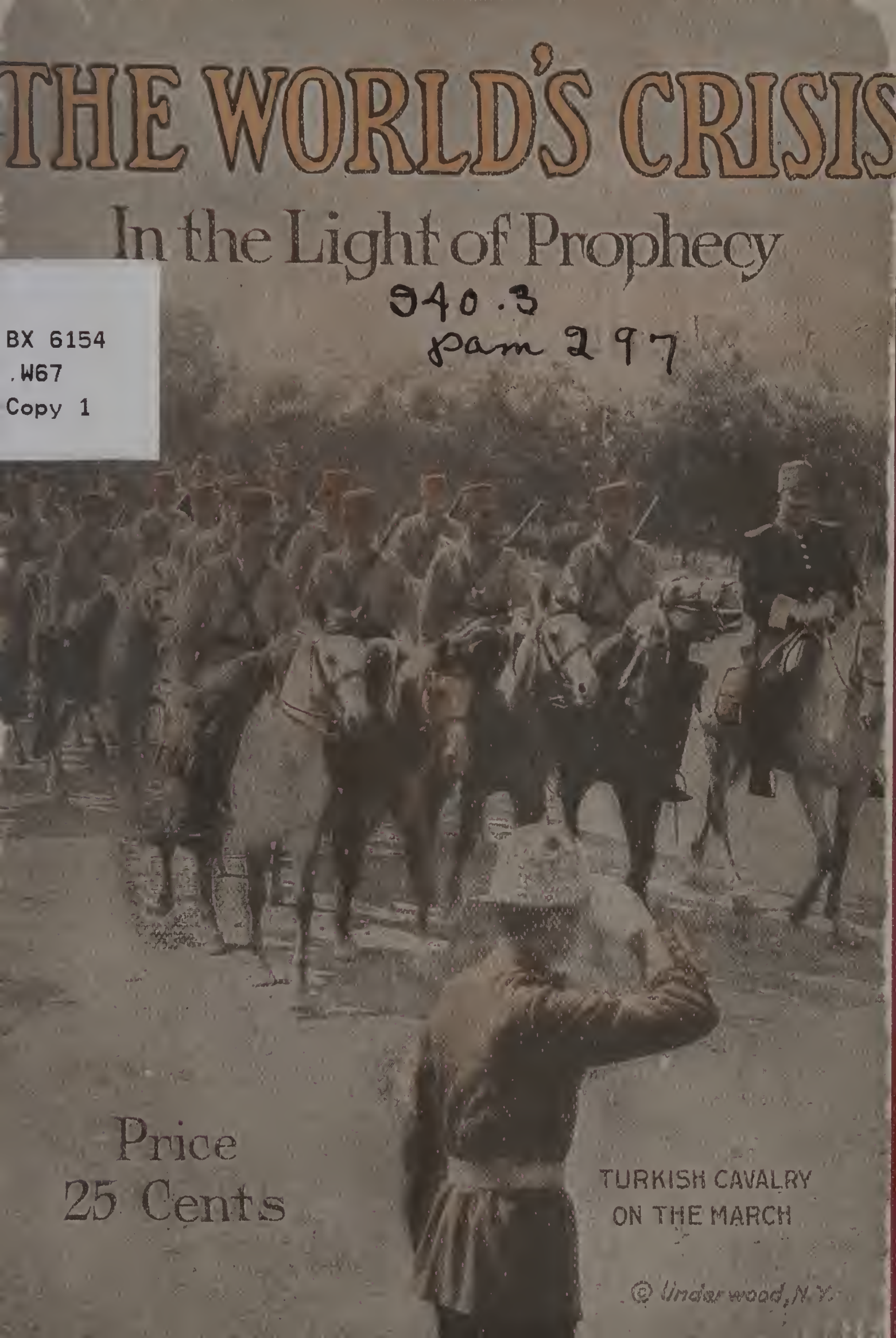

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The World's Crisis in the Light of Prophecy

(2) THE DIVINE TEACHER

THE WORLD'S CRISIS

IN THE

Light of Prophecy

"What do these things mean?"

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FOREWORD

"What Do These Things Mean?"

THAT world-changing events are taking place in these earnest times is universally recognized. The editor of the Edinburgh *Quarterly Review* said in his first issue after the outbreak of the European war: —

> Since the last issue of this *Review* the face of Europe, even of the world, has been changed; whatever the end of the war may be, few things will be quite the same as they were before.— *October, 1914.*

Another of the world's leading journals, the London *Fortnightly Review,* describes the events of these days as absolutely unprecedented: —

> There is nothing in history like them so far as we are aware. In the clash of the two great European organizations . . . we have all those wild features of universal chaos which the writer of the Apocalypse saw with prophetic eye as ushering in the great day of the Lord.— *Oct. 1, 1914.*

No wonder thoughtful minds in all the earth are pondering the question, "What do these things mean, and what is to be the outcome of these events?"

One impressive answer to the question comes from the great Church of England Missionary Society, in a letter of instruction issued to its outgoing missionaries: —

> It may be that these events will quickly usher in the return of Christ to gather his saints together from the four quarters of the earth.—"*Church Missionary Review,*" *November, 1914.*

May it be possible that events passing before our eyes are indeed leading rapidly on to the world's great crisis? Surely the situation calls for earnest study of God's Holy Word to learn what light the prophetic scriptures have for our day. The apostle Peter exhorts us to this study in these words: —

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

To that "sure word" we turn to get the Lord's own answer to the universal question,—

"WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?"

"Watchman on the walls of Zion,
What, O tell us, of the night?
Is the day-star now arising?
Will the morn soon greet our sight?
O'er your vision
Shine there now some rays of light?"

The Alarm

We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling —
To be living is sublime.
Hark! the waking up of nations,
Gog and Magog to the fray;
Hark! what soundeth? Is creation
Groaning for her latter day?

Christian, rouse and arm for conflict,
Nerve thee for the battle field;
Bear the helmet of salvation,
And the mighty gospel shield;
Let the breastplate, peace, be on thee,
Take the Spirit's sword in hand;
Boldly, fearlessly, go forth, then,
In Jehovah's strength to stand.

Wicked spirits gather round thee,
Legions of those foes to God —
Principalities most mighty —
Walk unseen the earth abroad;
They are gathering to the battle,
Strengthened for the last deep strife;
Christian, arm! be watchful, ready,
Struggle manfully for life.

Christian, rouse! fight in this warfare,
Cease not till the victory's won;
Till your Captain loud proclaimeth,
"Servant of the Lord, well done!"
He, alone, who thus is faithful,
Who abideth to the end,
Hath the promise, in the kingdom
An eternity to spend.

(8) AT HISTORIC WATERLOO — 1815

VIEWING THE BATTLE

CHAPTER I

THE PORTENT OF THE TIMES

The Great European Conflict and Its Meaning

WE have seen more than half the world suddenly plunged into a mighty conflict — Germany, Austria, and Turkey engaged in the shock of battle with Russia, Great Britain, Belgium, France, and Servia in Europe, and with Japan in the Orient. At once the flames of war blazed out in the African interior and among the islands of the Pacific; and warships or liners quickly converted into cruisers were attacking one another over all the seven seas. Other powers began at once to mobilize and to prepare for possibilities.

Never before in the history of man have all the resources of civilization — wealth, inventive genius, statecraft, generalship, science, and education — combined in the carrying on of such mortal, deadly combat. There was never such a letting loose of the winds of war, of tumult, and of destruction. As one European statesman declared at the opening of the conflict, " Europe is in the throes of an immeasurable catastrophe." The consequences are incalculable.

An Unparalleled Conflict

The editor of the *Scientific American* wrote of the unparalleled scope of this clash of empires: —

In point of magnitude the present conflict is absolutely without parallel. Never, in all the history of the world, have there been marshaled on the field of battle armies that even approached in numbers the hosts which are drawn up upon the frontiers of Ger-

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FRENCH BIVOUACKED NEAR YPRES

many and Austria. Not in the campaigns of Napoleon, nor the great Franco-German struggle of 1870-71, nor yet the seven-day battle of Mukden between Russia and Japan, was there seen such a gathering of warring hosts.— *Sept. 5, 1914.*

A Sudden, Tremendous, and Unexpected Catastrophe

With a sudden unexpectedness this great war storm burst upon the world. Speaking of the rapidity with which events shaped in bringing about the conflict, the editor of the London *Daily Telegraph* wrote as follows: —

As we look back over a week which has been full of the keenest excitement and the most feverish anxiety, we cannot fail to be struck with the extraordinary rapidity with which this present crisis has developed. . . .

Practically within the compass of a single week, we have had to watch the evolution of a crisis absolutely unparalleled in the memory of the present generation,— perhaps in the history of the world,— and have discovered tc our astonishment and dismay that we stand on the brink, not of a mere localized conflict in the east of Europe, but of an appalling European war. It is this alarming

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GERMANS IN PROTECTED TRENCHES

violence, this remorseless haste, as of a tornado tearing its way with resistless force across peaceful lands, which takes away our breath and paralyzes our thoughts. Before we have had time to guess whither events were leading us, we find ourselves in the center of the storm; and every man in every capital looks with feverish anticipation for what the next few hours may bring forth. Human imagination is stunned by so sudden, so tremendous, and so unexpected a catastrophe.— *Aug. 1, 1914.*

The Alignment of Mighty Forces

The strength of the armies engaged in this terrible conflict is variously stated. Careful estimates after four months of war claimed that there were seventeen million

men under arms in Europe. Of these the Triple Alliance, now composed of Germany, Austria, and Turkey, possesses about seven millions. The combined armies of the Triple Entente, composed of Great Britain, Russia, and France, with their allies, numbered at that time more than ten millions.

But the large number of soldiers engaged in this mighty struggle constitute by no means the only determining factor in the problem. There must also be considered the immense navies opposing each other on the high seas. At the beginning of the war Austria and Germany possessed 111 dreadnaughts and cruisers as against 273 of the same class of battleships owned by Great Britain, France, and Russia. This says nothing of the large number of destroyers, torpedo boats, etc., represented on both sides of the conflict.

And there must also be taken into the account the aerial fleets of these contending nations. According to Alfred W. Lawson, editor of *Aircraft,* Germany and Austria possessed together thirty-seven dirigibles and one thousand four hundred aeroplanes. France, Russia, and Great Britain possessed forty-five dirigibles, and two thousand three hundred aeroplanes. These modern fighting machines of the air have been actively engaged in scouting and attacking service, and, according to conservative military experts, this extension of warfare to the skies will become a yet greater factor in future conflicts.

A Cataclysm

Ex-Pres. William Howard Taft says in speaking of the present war: —

> Nothing like it has occurred since the great Napoleonic wars; and with modern armaments and larger populations, nothing has occurred like it since the world began. It is a cataclysm. . . . The future looks dark indeed, but we should not despair.— *The Independent, Aug. 10, 1914.*

It is certainly a cataclysm. In what condition will the nations emerge from it? What international boundaries will be obliterated? What changes will be made on the map of the world? What will be the cost in wealth and blood and human life, in ruined hopes and blasted ambitions, in heartaches and poignant grief, and wearing, grinding misery? God pity men in their blindness and madness!

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SCOTTISH HIGHLANDERS LANDING AT BOULOGNE

The Cost of War

For the most part the great national debts of the various governments of the Old World have been built up through the processes of war, either in carrying on aggressive warfare or in the increase of armaments and the support of large standing armies. Edgar Crammond, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*, presents the following list of the immense sums of money which have been required directly and indirectly by some of the great wars of the past: —

Crimean	1854	$1,700,000,000
Italian	1859	300,000,000
American Civil War	1861-65	
Northern army		4,700,000,000
Southern army		2,300,000,000
War of 1866 between Prussia, Austria, and Italy	1866	330,000,000
Franco-German	1870-71	2,200,000,000
Turko-Russian	1877	510,000,000
Chino-Japanese	1894	100,000,000
Spanish-American	1898	1,295,000,000
South African	1899-1902	1,350,000,000
Russo-Japanese	1904-05	2,515,000,000
Balkan War	1912-13	1,230,000,000

The cost of the present war will be immeasurably greater than any which has preceded it. At the very beginning of hostilities the British Parliament voted a war fund of one billion twenty-five million dollars. This has been added to by a still larger war loan for the prosecution of Great Britain's part in this great conflict. Some of the other nations have also provided large sums. It is estimated that the cost of the war operations as they are being carried on exceeds the sum of fifty million dollars daily.

The Toll of Human Life

But great as this sum is, and representing all that it does in burdensome taxation, it is nothing compared with the thousands of precious lives, the flower of the manhood of Europe, which are being sacrificed in this terrible tragedy. The war calls husbands to leave their wives, fathers their children, sons their parents, never to return. They are cut down as dumb herds driven to the shambles. Thousands and tens of thousands die in bloody battle, by wasting fever, or from cold and exposure. They die unattended and unwept. Only He who keeps watch above his erring children knows where they lie, some in trenches, some unburied on war-desolated fields.

Long years ago the prophet of sorrow was given a

vision of these direful scenes in earth's history. Looking down through the ages he saw the terrible destruction that would befall the nations of men, and this was his sad lament: —

"I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment." Jer. 4: 19, 20.

General Causes of the Conflict

It affords little comfort to speculate over the causes of these unparalleled conditions. The reasons for this great world war lie far back of the passions or prejudices of cabinets or rulers. Albert Bushnell Hart, professor of history in Harvard University, says of the general causes of the conflict: —

It is no explanation to say that this king or that emperor or the other president or prime minister wants war. Sovereigns nowadays are, at their strongest, only train dispatchers who can order a switch thrown in one or another direction. No monarch can go against the spirit of his people. Every country included is united in what is considered a natural war. It is not a war of dynasties or statesmen or military leaders. It is not a war of revenge for Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

Questions of trade and markets play a large part in the drama — but it is not the love of money which leads great navies to spend five thousand million dollars in order to secure a trade in which the profit cannot be more than two hundred millions a year. This is a war of peoples and not of interests.

The military spirit, commercial expansion, desire for territory, and the self-assertion of great nations are things that in the long run may overcome all the checks of Parliaments and statesmen and The Hague conferences. But none of them could have brought about the fearful conditions of the year 1914. The strongest and determining reason for war is the growth of race antipathies; the world has at last realized that the political boundaries of Eastern Europe cut across older and more persistent divisions of race, language, and religion, and thus bring conflicts with nations and between them.— *World's Work, September, 1914.*

The Spark in the Powder Magazine

For the more immediate cause of the conflict we have only to go back a period of six years. "The fatal fire was lit," says Leon Dominian, in the New York Evening *Post*, "in 1908 in the heart of the mountains of Macedonia, when a Turkish officer sent a telegram to Sultan Abdul Hamid, demanding the reestablishment of the form of constitutional government in Turkey." To this statement, the editor of *Current Opinion* adds: —

Out of that event came a Turkish parliament. To that par-

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CANADIAN TROOPS

liament Bosnia and Herzegovina claimed the right to send delegates, for by the treaty of Berlin they were left suzerain to Turkey although turned over to Austria-Hungary for administration. This claim caused an embarrassment in Vienna that was ended by the high-handed annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serbs, who constitute the main part of these two provinces, were inflamed to the point of war then, but Russia restrained them. Her response to the move on the chessboard came later in the shape of the Balkan Alliance, which expelled the Turks and then went to pieces in trying to divide the spoils. The Serbs, who have their own dreams of national grandeur, felt cheated once more by Austria, and out of the race hatred that has smoldered and flamed for centuries came the assassination of the Austrian archduke, on the 28th of last June, by a Serb lad of nineteen, resident in Herzegovina. On July 23 Austria-Hungary sent her peremptory note to Servia demanding that she crush out the agitation against

Austria and punish those accused of complicity in the murder of the archduke. Servia's reply was not considered satisfactory, and on July 28 war was declared upon her. Austria says she could not wait longer because Servia was already mobilizing. Russia says that she had to begin mobilizing at once because Austria was mobilizing. Germany declared war because she found Russia mobilizing and did not dare wait for Russia to strike first. France began mobilizing because Germany had begun. Belgium was forced into war to resist the invasion by German troops, and Great Britain went to war because she had guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium and Germany refused to respect it.— *September, 1914.*

What Do These Things Mean?

As the world has witnessed the deadly combat, involun-

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BELGIAN SOLDIERS IN WINTER DRESS

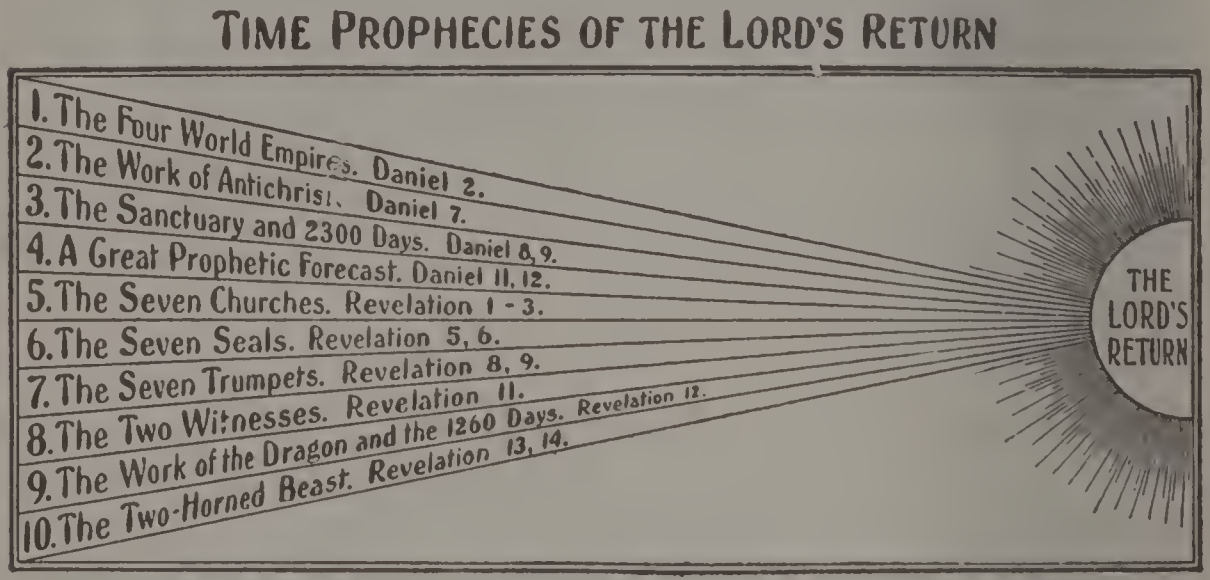
tarily the question has come from every quarter, what is the significance and portent of this terrible strife? What does it all mean? What will be the outcome of this great upheaval? Into thousands of minds has entered the conviction that the conditions now existing are signs of the end of all things, a fulfillment of the prophetic word with respect to the last days of earth's history, and that there is a lesson taught by this latest outbreak of bloody strife which can be learned only in the light of Scripture.

The Heralds of the Morning

This conviction is well founded. The prophecies of the Bible indicate that we are living in the closing days of time. The kingdoms of this world are soon to become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. The exact time we may not know. No man by the prophetic periods can figure out the day of the Master's coming, but we may know that his coming is nigh, even at the doors. And we may know it as assuredly as we may know that summer is nigh when the trees begin to put forth their leaves. Matt. 24: 32, 33.

Prophecies Pointing to Christ's Coming

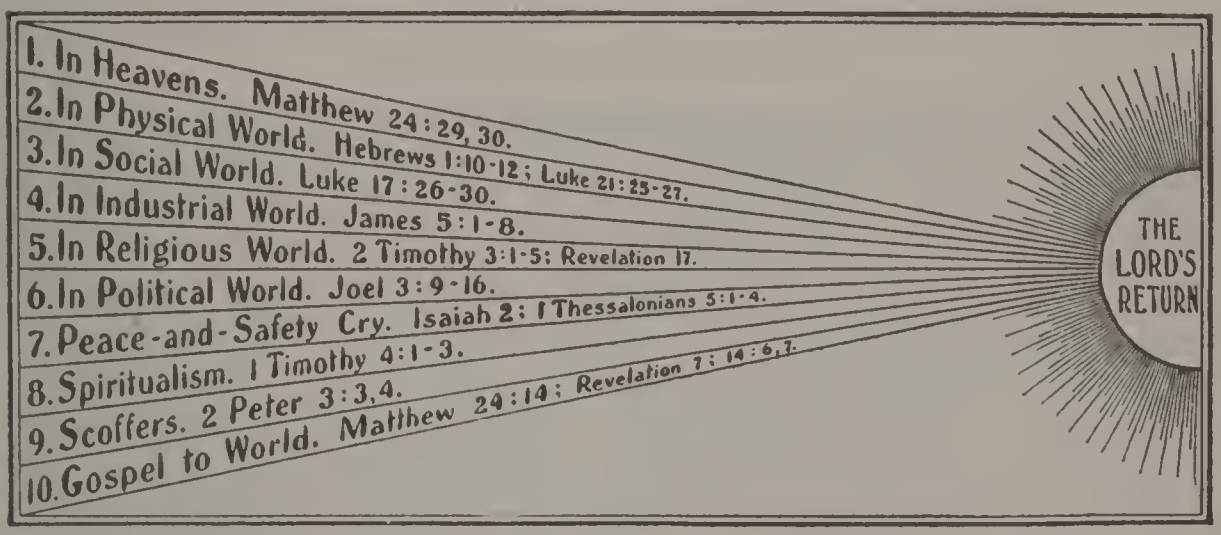
Consider the evidences presented in the two accompanying diagrams. The first diagram presents ten great prophetic forecasts of a series of events which were to take place among the nations of men and in connection with the church of God. Every prophecy cited directs attention to the same focal point, and that is the return



to this earth of the Lord Jesus Christ. They all indicate that we are living down in the comparatively little space just preceding the coming of the Lord, and that but little more remains to the complete fulfillment of the prophetic period bringing us to the coming of Christ.

The second outline presents the sign prophecies of the Lord's return,— prophecies of conditions which would exist in the world just preceding the second coming of Christ. These signs are in process of fulfillment today.

SIGN PROPHECIES OF THE LORD'S RETURN



They speak with one voice, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

Distress of Nations

Prominent among the signs of the end of the age are given the distress attending the nations of earth, and their preparations for war. Christ in his great prophetic discourse declares: —

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21: 25-27.

We have reached this time of national distress. Trouble from without and from within, perplexing problems of commerce and industry, the stern struggle for existence on the part of the laboring masses and the spirit begotten in their hearts by their hard lot,— these are some of the things which are bringing distress to the

nations of earth at the present time. Men's hearts are failing them for fear. They view with alarm the growing unrest and disquietude. They listen with apprehension to the mutterings of the coming storm in our industrial and political life, which sometime is bound to break into an overwhelming deluge.

War Preparations Foretold

The vast and feverish preparations for war which the nations have been making for the last three decades have been clearly foretold, and all this war preparation is a sign of the coming of the day of the Lord. The inspired penman declares: —

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3: 9-16.

How fully and graphically do we see this divine prediction fulfilled in the situation which exists throughout the world at the present time. And we cannot mistake its significance. Centuries ago the Lord, through his holy prophets, declared that these conditions would be found in the last days, and that they would constitute a sign of the end of all things. We have reached the time in earth's history when these conditions exist. It is not a mere coincidence. It is an exact and literal fulfillment

of the divine prediction. Surely we cannot escape the inevitable conclusion to which this fulfillment must lead us.

The Time of Judgment

But transcending in importance these earthly events now taking place are the greater and more far-reaching questions of heavenly origin and eternal import, of which

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PEASANT REFUGEES IN EAST PRUSSIA

the conditions in the earth are but the precursors. At the time when the nations are angry, when the cup of iniquity has been filled to overflowing, does the great Judge arise to call to account the nations of men. Says the prophet of the Lord: —

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 18.

Truly the European conflict has witnessed the anger

of the nations. Every nation involved went into the war as a fight for national existence, determined, if necessary in the maintenance of its cause, to call to its aid the last available man.

By the things we now see taking place we may know of the things soon to be revealed. The distress of nations, the vast preparations for war, the raging conflict of contending armies as in anger and fury they strive for the mastery,— these are the signs of the day of God soon to be ushered in.

Man Cannot Save Himself

Man has demonstrated that he cannot save himself. All the forces of education,— poetry, science, and art,— aside from Christ are powerless to change the human heart. Civilization has broken down in its testing. Beyond the wrecks of human government, beyond the strivings of earth's multitude, beyond the records of time as related to this age, the inhabitants of earth must look for final and lasting peace.

Soon He will come whose right it is to reign, the Prince of Peace. The glories of the eternal day will be ushered in. Darkness will give place to light; truth will triumph over error; joy will supplant sorrow; peace will banish pain. The cries of the sick and suffering, of the orphans and widows, of the wounded and dying, will give place to shouts of victory over sin and all unrighteousness. Blessed event! Blessed to those who have come to know the peace of God in this world, and who desire to enjoy it in the world to come. Hasten, glad day.

What Does It Mean to You?

Reader, what will the coming of Jesus mean to you? Where do you propose to spend eternity? Will you be found so filled with the spirit of this present world, so identified with its interests, so dominated by

its purposes, that you will be counted as dross in that testing time? Or will you become so acquainted with Christ as your Saviour, so filled with his companionship, that you will meet him with rejoicing when he comes? He calls you today to give yourself to him. He has given his life for your salvation. He loves you with an everlasting love. He invites, "Son, give me thine heart;" "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart;" "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." Peace in the midst of the present strife and turmoil, peace throughout eternity,—this is the heritage of the child of God. To this satisfying, enduring peace he invites you by his Spirit. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22: 17.

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MOTOR AMBULANCE

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(24) EGYPTIAN TROOPS

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CONSTANTINOPLE, ON THE BOSPORUS

CHAPTER II

THE EASTERN QUESTION IN PROPHECY

What Comes When Turkey Falls?

WITH Turkey's entrance into the European conflict, it was everywhere recognized that a new chapter of the Eastern Question had been opened.

Men saw that whatever the immediate outcome of the war might be, the vast issues for which the historic Eastern Question stands, were sure to be brought nearer to solution. Dealing with these issues in an address before the Society for Ethical Culture, Dr. Felix Adler, of New York, was thus reported in a dispatch to the Washington press: —

PRESENT STRUGGLE ONLY PRELUDE TO CLASH OF THE EAST AND WEST

The present war will not last. It is only a prelude to a greater one involving all civilization. There is something more than Germany and the Allies. There are heard the first mutterings of the "holy war"— Asia and Africa against Europe and America, . . . the uprising of the East against the West.— *Herald, Nov. 30, 1914.*

The certainty that a new element had been injected into the great war was conveyed to us in the press announcements of Oct. 31, 1914: —

LONDON, October 30.— A dispatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company from Rome says: —

"It is reported from Constantinople that a battle between Turkish and Russian fleets is in progress off Odessa."

There have been great manifestations in Damascus, in Asiatic Turkey, in favor of a war against Christians, and especially against Great Britain, according to a dispatch from Athens.

Turkey's action seems to make it probable that the area of conflict may be greatly widened and the issues complicated. The English papers recognize that the addition of Turkey to the belligerent forces probably will prolong the war and increase its horrors.

Commenting on this news, the two great foreign papers of New York, diametrically opposed in their views of the European war, united in describing the entry of the leading Moslem power into the struggle as marking a crisis indeed in Turkish history: —

"SICK MAN OF EUROPE" MAKES HIS LAST STAND

It is the last defense of the "Sick Man of Europe" of his dominions. If it fails, Russia will have the Dardanelles and the Hellespont.— *Staats-Zeitung (German), Oct. 31, 1914.*

DELUDED, . . . TURKS RUSH TO SUICIDE

Turkey is running to suicide, and the European war, already formidable, extending from neighbor to neighbor, will soon involve fourteen nations. . . . The worst calamity in the history of the world.— *Courrier des Etats-Unis (French), Oct. 31, 1914.*

If it should prove to be really Turkey's "last stand" in Europe, all must recognize that it means a long step toward the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in Asia. And if events rush on to the annihilation of this power,— which the French paper declares now to be "running to suicide,"— what then? In the light of the "sure word of prophecy" it is clear that the end of the Ottoman Empire comes with the end of human probation, the gathering of the nations to the final Armageddon, and then the second advent of our Lord in power and glory.

"Watch . . . for Ye Know Neither the Day nor the Hour"

There is to be no setting of dates for the end of this age or for the coming of the Lord. "Of that day and hour," said Jesus, "knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matt. 24: 36. This is not the time, nor is this the subject, for human speculalation or predictions. Rather, let the clear outlines of the prophecy be placed alongside the plain facts of history. By the prophetic scriptures —"whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place"— we are to know the nearness of the time, and be watchful and ready, saved from every sin when probation closes just before Christ appears. The Lord expects us to study his Word and watch for the evidences of the near approach of the last day: —

"But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5: 1-4.

Historic Prophecies That Deal With the Eastern Question

The Eastern Question, as everybody knows, involves the question of dominion or political supremacy in the regions of the Near East. International politics of Europe have largely revolved around this question for more than a century. This question of supremacy in Syria and Palestine and the whole region of the eastern Mediterranean was an ancient problem also. Maspero, historian of ancient civilizations, says: —

Some countries seem destined from their origin to become the battle fields of the contending nations. . . . The nations around are eager for the possession of a country thus situated. . . . From remote antiquity Syria was in the condition just described. By its position it formed a kind of meeting place, where most of the military nations of the ancient world were bound sooner or later to come violently into collision.—"*Struggle of the Nations*," *chap. 1.*

It is not strange therefore that one of the great outlines of historic prophecy should deal with events centering around this pivotal region. The prophecy of Daniel 11 does so, outlining the course of history from the ancient times to the final solution of the Eastern Question amidst the scenes of the end.

It was in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia (Dan. 10: 1), that the angel revealed the order of events to the prophet. Let us put prophecy and history together: —

PROPHECY.— "Now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far

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TURKISH FORTIFICATIONS ON THE BOSPORUS

richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia." Dan. 11: 2.

HISTORY.— The three kings following Cyrus were (1) Cambyses, (2) Smerdis, (3) Darius; and the fourth, Xerxes, was "far richer than they all." He had the treasures of his father, Darius, who was called the "merchant" or "hoarder" by his own people, and Xerxes gathered stores of wealth in addition; and by his wealth he was able to "stir up all," an army of millions, to invade Grecia. The Greek poet, Æschylus, who himself fought against the Persians, wrote of Xerxes' mighty host: —

"And myriad-peopled Asia's king, a battle-eager lord,
From utmost east to utmost west, sped on his countless horde."
— "*Persæ*," *80*.

Xerxes failed; and the Persian invasion led the Greeks to determine to await their turn against Persia. The attack of Grecia upon Persia, led by Alexander the Great, being the next great world event, the prophecy passes next to Grecia: —

PROPHECY.— "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity." Dan. 11: 3, 4.

HISTORY.— Alexander the Great stood up and ruled with great dominion, over a kingdom stretching from India to Grecia, with kings yet farther west sending embassies to Babylon to make submission. But in the height of his power, as the prophecy suggests, he was suddenly cut down by death. All his posterity perished, and out of the struggles of his generals for supremacy came (301 B. C.) the division of the empire toward "the four winds," as the prophecy had declared so long before. Rawlinson, the historian, says: —

"A quadripartite division of Alexander's dominion was recognized, Macedonia [west], Egypt [south], Asia Minor [north], and Syria [east, extending beyond the Euphrates]."—"*Sixth Monarchy*," *chap. 3*.

Next, a rearrangement of these powers is noted; and it is this that gives us the key to the study of the closing portion of the long prophetic outline dealing with events of our own day. The narrative continues: —

PROPHECY.— "And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes . . . shall be strong above him; . . . his dominion shall be a great dominion." Verse 5.

HISTORY.— The history testifies that the king of the south (Egypt) was strong, under the Ptolemies, but one of the four princes was "strong above him." Seleucus, of Syria and the east, pushed his dominion northward, subduing most of Asia Minor and extending his boundary into Thrace, on the European side, just beyond the extent of Turkey in Europe today. With varying fortunes, this general arrangement of these powers continued. Henceforward, as Mahaffy says, "there were three great kingdoms — Macedonia, Egypt, Syria — which lasted, each under its own dynasty, till Rome swallowed them up."—"*Alexander's Empire*," *page 89*. Thus Se-

leucus took the territory of the north, and the Syrian power became king of the north, its empire stretching from Thrace, in Europe, through Asia Minor to Syria and the Euphrates. The seat of empire was after a time removed from the east, and Antioch, in northern Syria, became the famous capital, "once the third city of the world."

The prophecy next foretold in remarkable detail the contests between these two strong powers, the king of the north and the king of the south. The conflict raged back and forth till the coming of the Romans. The Holy Land was the great meeting place of the contending armies. The Encyclopedia Britannica describes it: —

Palestine was as of old the battle field for the king of the north and the king of the south. . . . The history of these times is lost in its details.—*Ninth edition, article "Macedonian Empire."*

Passing over these details, and all the history intervening, we must come at once to the closing portion of the prophecy, which deals with events of the latter days. Here we find the king of the north again a chief actor, "at the time of the end," in this same region; and when that power comes to its end, as we shall read in a moment, it is the signal that the great day of God at last has come.

The World's Crisis

Well may we ask, therefore, *What power in these last days is the king of the north?* Assuredly it must be the power that holds dominion in the regions of the ancient king of the north of the first part of the prophecy. The divine prophecy named the power by its geographical location. That is certain. When Seleucus, of Syria and the east, conquered Asia Minor and the north, he became king of the north. Through the story of two centuries this Syrian Empire — that stretched from the regions about Constantinople to the Euphrates — is called the king of the north in the prophecy. Whatever power holds dominion over this region of Asia Minor and Syria

must be king of the north in the language of divine prophecy. And every reader knows that today Turkey, the Ottoman Empire, occupies this very region. Today, then, Turkey is the king of the north. Of the later history and end of the king of the north, the prophecy says: —

"Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace [evidently the seat of government] between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 11: 44, 45; 12: 1.

The opening verses graphically describe the later history of Turkey to this day. Disquietude has come by the "tidings out of the east and out of the north." Piece by piece the eastern possessions in the Transcaucasus have been taken away. And province by province on the north, the Turkish Empire has been whittled down. "None shall help him" at the last, the prophecy says of the king of the north. It suggests that formerly this power has had help. For a century it has been a doctrine of the diplomacy of western Europe that Turkey must be maintained. Turkey has been helped in crises again and again, especially by Great Britain. The powers have feared that the dismemberment of Turkey would involve the whole world in war. In one of his speeches, as premier of Great Britain, the late Lord Salisbury said: —

Turkey is in that remarkable condition in which it has now stood for half a century, mainly because the great powers of the world have resolved that for the peace of Christendom it is necessary that the Ottoman Empire should stand.

The veteran premier stated the fear of modern statesmen that the fall of Turkey would mean calamity involving all Christendom. And the ancient prophecy declares that when the king of the north comes to his end, it will mean "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."

What modern statesmen have seen impending, and sought to prevent, the ancient prophecy declares will surely come.

THE OTTOMAN (TURKISH) EMPIRE IN 1648

"He shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

A New Testament Prophecy

This same time of trouble for the nations is dealt with in a New Testament prophecy; and the end of the Turkish power is stated to be the signal for the day of trouble, just as the end of the king of the north is the signal for it in this prophecy of Daniel 11. In the sixteenth chapter of Revelation, the prophet describes the drying up of "the great river Euphrates," "that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared:"—

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared." Rev. 16: 12.

By the drying up of the power represented by the river Euphrates, the way is prepared for the next step — the gathering "of the whole world" to "the battle of that great day of God almighty"— the Armageddon of the nations. Verses 14-16.

As the Nile stood for Egypt and the Tiber for Rome,

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN 1914

so in all modern times the Euphrates has stood for Turkey and the Moslem Empire. Through the centuries since the Turkish invasion of Europe reached its crest, that power has been dwindling and shrinking, until now but little remains to it in Europe. Some day, according to this prophecy of Revelation, it will be entirely "dried up," just as the king of the north (of Daniel 11) will "come to his end;" and then, according to both prophecies, comes the great day of God. Because of the love that God has for all peoples — for he is no respecter of persons or of nations — he gives to the world these signs of the approaching end of all earthly empire.

Jerusalem as a Storm Center

In the process of the closing history, as described in the last verse of Daniel 11, the king of the north is to "plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain." This suggests the eventual transfer, before he comes to his end, of the seat of his government to Jerusalem, or Zion, which is called "the holy mountain." Zech. 8:3.

Significant indeed, in view of this prophecy, is the attitude of Mohammedans toward Jerusalem. It is to them a holy city. And it is the city, even above Mecca or Medina, around which the Mohammedans are to rally at the end of the world, according to oldest Mohammedan doctrine. Thus Hughes's "Dictionary of Islam" says: —

> In Surah l. 40 [of the Koran], one of the signs of the approach of the last day will be: "The crier [to prayer] shall cry from a near place" (that is, a place from which all men shall hear). Husain says this "near place" is the temple at Jerusalem.—*Article "Jerusalem."*

One of the old commentators on the Koran, Jalalan, is thus summarized by Hughes: —

> It was at Jerusalem that Jesus ascended to heaven; and it will be there that he will again descend. . . . In the last days there will be a general flight to Jerusalem.—*Id.*

Despite lack of space, may we add one more testimony to the importance attached by Islam to the holding of Jerusalem? It is from an old Arab commentator and geographer, Mukaddasi (A. D. 985): —

> As to the excellence of the city. Why, is not this to be the place of marshaling on the day of judgment; where the gathering together and the appointment will take place? Verily Makkah [Mecca] and Al Madina have their superiority by reason of the Ka'abah and the Prophet,—the blessing of Allah be upon him and his family! —but, in truth, on the day of judgment both cities will come to Jerusalem, and the excellencies of them all will then be united.—*Le Strange, "Palestine Under the Moslems," page 85.*

Modern travelers in Turkey have long told of the feeling among thoughtful Turkish people that the crisis of their nation is at hand. Thus: —

The Turks themselves seem generally to be convinced that their final hour is approaching. . . . "It is *kismet*. We cannot resist destiny." I heard words to this effect from many Turks, as well in Asia as in Europe.— *MacFarlane's "Kismet," page 409.*

Ancient prophecy and modern superstition alike point to the return of the Crescent into Asia as an event at hand. . . . The feeling of a coming catastrophe is so deeply rooted, and so universal [etc.].— *Wilfred Scawen Blunt, "Future of Islam," page 95.*

MODERN JERUSALEM

But a few years ago one of the Seventh-day Adventist missionaries in Constantinople wrote to his Mission Board in Washington: —

Within the past few months quite a company of people from the Transcaucasus district have come to Ismid,— old Nicomedia,— bringing all they possess with them. Some of them possess considerable wealth. When asked if they were going to settle in Ismid, they replied that they would settle nowhere permanently at present. They stated that they had come to be prepared to go with their leader when he left Constantinople to go to Jerusalem.

No man may foresee just exactly how events will turn in detail. But the great truth rings in our ears like a

trumpet peal: the Eastern Question is hastening on to its final solution, and its solution brings the end of the world! The prophecy declares that the fall of the Turkish power ushers in the end. And everywhere the newspapers can see nothing but the hastening of Turkey's end in the turn events have taken. Thus the Washington *Times* said editorially at the time when Turkey entered the war: —

> There is not the possible chance of Turkey ultimately gaining, however the war may go. If she allies herself with Germany, and Germany wins, what next? . . . Turkey will be brushed out of Europe, and presently out of existence. . . . On the other hand, what if the Allies win? There will be no more of the weak-kneed British attitude that in the past has made Downing Street chief supporter of the Sick Man, lest his demise open the way for Russia to Constantinople. . . . If the Allies win, it will mean not merely the end of Turkey in Europe, but of Turkey. The empire will be dismembered; perhaps not immediately, but in the processes of no great period.— *Nov. 1, 1914.*

Dispatches from Petrograd gave us the Russian view as follows (November 2): —

> The *Bourse Gazette:* "It is Russia's opportunity. There is no general combination of powers such as several times saved Turkey from final destruction. . . . Russia accepts the challenge thrown down, and marches to the fulfillment of her destiny."
>
> The *Novoe Vremya* (of the day when Turkey entered the war): "That day was the day of the virtual death of the once glorious Ottoman Empire."

Thus before our eyes today events have been taking place of deepest eternal interest. The war in Europe brought upon its people a time of trouble that we can scarcely conceive of. But the prophecy forewarns us of the swift approach of that world-wide "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." No man may tell the day or the hour or the year, or the exact course of events in detail. Idle speculation or appeals merely to excitement are deplorable in these matters of eternal moment. But every outline of prophecy in all

Holy Scripture cries to men now, echoing the Saviour's warning: "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Let not any soul say, "I will wait and see, and will believe and turn to God when Turkey comes to its end." That means eternal loss; for it plainly appears from the prophecy of Revelation concerning the drying up or ending of this power that when it comes to its end the day of human probation will already have passed forever. The end of the Turkish power (described in Rev. 16: 12) comes after Christ's work as mediator for sinners has ceased in the heavenly temple. Rev. 15: 8. It will then be eternally too late. Then the solemn words will have been spoken: —

> "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly." Rev. 22: 11, 12.

"Now is the accepted time," not then; "behold, now is the day of salvation."

(38) MARSHALING OF THE NATIONS

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IN BATTLE LINE

CHAPTER III

APPROACHING ARMAGEDDON

IT is nearly two thousand years since Jesus Christ came into this world heralded by a choir of angels to preach the good news of salvation and the gospel of peace, and to show to this world God's good will toward men. That gospel has been carried through the world for nineteen centuries; men have given their lives to make it known; the spires of Christian churches point to heaven from every country in the world.

Yet we have seen a whole continent, very nearly, with alliances and dependencies representing half the world, suddenly involved in maddening strife. Yesterday there were comparative peace, prosperity, and kindly ministration; today there are turmoil and famine, distrust, hatred, ruin, dismay.

Publicists have declared war could not come in civilization such as ours; but civilization could not guarantee peace. The hand that leaned upon that staff has been pierced by it in the breaking.

The world has seen all this and is asking what it means. Men have heard the prophecies of peace, but

they have seen such a fearful war as no previous generation ever witnessed. Through misreading of the word of prophecy, many have believed and preached with all earnestness that the kingdom of peace and righteousness is to be established in this world by human means. This utterance from the prophet Isaiah they have interpreted in that manner: —

"And he [God] shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isa. 2: 4.

Who is the author of that declaration? Does God say it? The verse immediately preceding the one just quoted reads: —

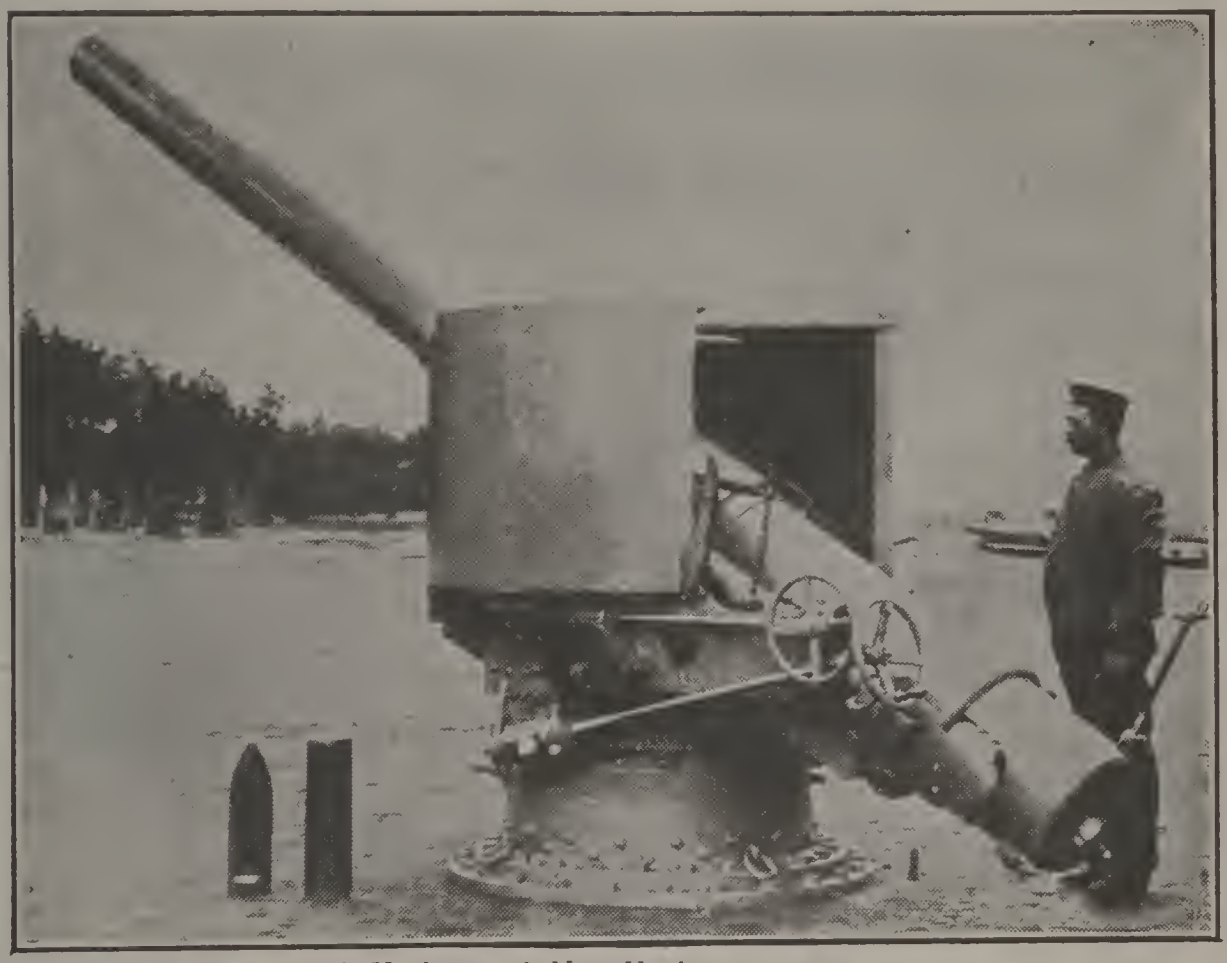
"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Who says it? —"Many people." And they are saying it now. Through Isaiah the Lord declared ages ago that people would be saying just this in the last days. And what else are many saying now? — That "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;" and that "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." When are they saying it? The second verse of the same chapter tells us that "it shall come to pass in the last days," etc.

Then "in the last days" we are to hear much talk of an epoch of peace, tranquillity, and prosperity; much talk of regulating all human conduct by divine law; much talk of the church regulating all the affairs of the world; much talk of the speedy and perpetual elimination of war from the activities of this world. If we

had no other proof that we are living in the last days, present-day facts fulfilling that prophecy would be proof enough. That scripture describes our times, and our times fulfill that scripture.

Now what is the truth in reference to this question? Are we to have a millennium of peace, or does this old world come to its end in a general cataclysm of the na-



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A MODERN KRUPP GUN

tions? In the same chapter we learn what the true conditions will be in the last days. It portrays a condition of terror in the world: —

"Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty,

and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low. . . . And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa. 2: 10-19.

A very different condition of things is this from the condition which "many people" are looking for; but that scripture agrees perfectly with what our Saviour himself declared would be. He said: —

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the

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sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21: 25-27.

We have seen the signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars. We are seeing the distress of nations and their perplexity; and men's hearts are today trembling with fear because of what they see and hear. But the Sav-

iour declares that this condition is to be followed by his coming in the clouds of heaven. He makes no provision for an epoch of peace. Instead he tells us of a time when —

"the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?" Rev. 6: 15-17, A. R. V.

No Epoch of Peace

There is no promise there of an epoch of peace and safety. It is a time of distress and perplexity and fear and terror, and it leads right into the coming of the Son of God, the destruction of the wicked, and the reward of the righteous. We have another divine word in reference to these conditions.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5: 2, 3.

Sudden destruction comes when they are saying, "Peace and safety." They have been saying, "Peace and safety," in all parts of the world during the last few years. They have held peace congresses, and have dedicated a magnificent palace to that idea. Every nation had armed itself to guarantee peace; and then the forces of destruction were turned loose upon the world. Millions of men sprang to arms — and the arms were ready. Men forgot that they were armed to guarantee peace; and they began to fight one another with all fury and to die like herds of cattle driven to the slaughter. Surely there was no peace, but sudden and terrible destruction.

Is This Armageddon?

The people of this world, in spite of the "peace and safety" cry, have a sort of vague and shadowy idea of a great battle that is to be the last battle of this world, and they have been taught to believe that when it has been fought, there will be no more war; but that the kingdom of God will be quietly established in the world,

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THE OLD AND THE NEW

America's first battleship the "Constitution," and two modern submarines in Charleston Navy Yard.

and tranquillity and peace will rule supreme. Of the battle of Armageddon the Bible speaks thus: —

"And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. . . . And they gathered them together unto the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." Rev. 16: 13-16, A. R. V.

The spirits of demons are, according to God's Word, the actuating agencies in stirring up the awful spirit of strife which culminates in the battle of the great day of God, the Almighty — Armageddon. The evil agencies from beneath are busy, and are gathering in the nations one by one to the great swirling vortex of mutual ruin.

When Turkey decided to fling herself into this fray,

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it brought even more clearly to view the possibility that this terrible grapple of the nations of the world is leading straight on toward Armageddon. While Turkey kept out and the war was confined to Europe, Armageddon did not seem so near. That old battle ground of the ancient nations is located in Palestine, at the foot of Mt. Megiddo, in the plain of Esdraelon, north of Jerusalem, accessible from north and south and from the sea. This region of the Near East is to be the storm

center round which the hosts of the nations will gather in the last mighty battles of this world.

Centuries ago this world was warned that a time would come when the call to war would go ringing through the earth and the nations would respond. Here is the call, long ago predicted and divinely recorded, that was to summon the participants to that final fray, the prophecy only voicing the spirit that was to rule the world in the last days: —

"Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the wine press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision." Joel 3: 9-14, A. R. V.

The meaning of Jehoshaphat is, "Jehovah does justice." Therefore it is "the valley of decision," or "cutting off," the valley of Jehovah's judgment.

Reason for Armageddon

The reason for the assembly of the nations at Armageddon seems plain when we consider the logical result of Turkey's entrance into this war. If she is driven out of Europe and forced out of western Asia Minor, it would seem she must withdraw into Syria and Palestine. When the nations, east and west, come to grips in the Holy Land, we shall have Armageddon. And will peace follow it? — Nay, verily. Note what the prophecy says will follow Armageddon: —

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. . . . And the cities

of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God. . . . And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." Rev. 16: 16-20.

Armageddon marks the consummation of the gospel work in the earth, the consummation of the age. It will be a time of terror for the ungodly and the unbeliever; but they that put their trust in Jehovah shall be as Mt. Zion that cannot be moved. Says the apostle: —

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you; and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." 2 Thess. 1: 6-10, A. R. V.

That event is synchronous with the close of the battle of Armageddon. No battles will be fought after that, for there will be no one left to fight them. That closes the history of this present world, and leaves the wicked slain upon the earth and the righteous on their way with angelic escort to the place of their reward.

We are swiftly driving on toward Armageddon. It is the crisis of the world. "Behold the Judge standeth at the door." And the Saviour is knocking at the door of every heart. Let us invite him in, with all his saving grace.

God has not told us just when the end of all things earthly will come; but he has given us the sign of that mighty approaching battle that we might know when it is near. With that sign before us and with the open Book of God in our hand, who can say that God has left the world unwarned?

(48) DANIEL INTERPRETING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

DANIEL IN BABYLON

CHAPTER IV

WAYMARKS TO THE KINGDOM

Prophetic Outlines of the World's History

A GUIDING light is most highly appreciated when the darkness is the thickest. The mariner who is sailing upon an unknown sea will watch his chart most closely when he is drawing near to his long-looked-for haven. The prophetic word is "a light that shineth in a dark place," a chart which marks out the course of history and indicates the approaching end. "Blessed is he that readeth," and "let him that readeth understand."

Where Worldly Wisdom Has Failed

The inability of men to interpret the times, and the confessed failure of human predictions, were never emphasized more clearly than in this very time when the

wisdom of this world is vaunting itself. Many were asserting that the era was about to be ushered in when the nations would not learn war any more, and peace congresses were confidently arranging for the settlement of all international differences by arbitration — when one deadly weapon suddenly precipitated the greatest war of all history. Confused by this unexpected and fierce outbreak of the same old spirit, some are asking in almost despairing tones whether Christianity is a failure, and whether after all the gospel of peace will triumph.

What is the explanation of this confusion of ideas and this failure to understand the signs of the times? This question is easily answered: Men have substituted the sparks of their own kindling for the light of prophecy, and charts of their own making for the divine chart of prophecy. Hence surprise and perplexity and often doubt and unbelief. Surely these shattered theories and the failure of these false hopes ought to turn men's minds to the sure Word of God, designed to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

Light for the Latter Days

In the book of Daniel there is given a brief but clear outline of world empire covering a period of more than twenty-five centuries, commencing with ancient Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and extending to the establishment of the kingdom of God in the place of all earthly kingdoms. He who compares the predictions made through the prophet Daniel with the records of history must acknowledge, as King Nebuchadnezzar did to Daniel, that God is a "Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." He has declared the end from the beginning. There is light here for our time.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, recorded in Daniel 2, and the prophet's interpretation, deal with affairs of vital interest today. "There is a God in

heaven," said Daniel, " that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

The circumstances attending this dream are both interesting and significant, and the setting given to this prophecy is a most natural one under the circumstances.* The unusual thing in this case was that King Nebuchadnezzar, being unable to recall his dream, demanded of the wise men of Babylon that they should tell him both the dream and the interpretation. In view of their claim to the possession of a wisdom not vouchsafed to ordinary mortals, and to the privilege of communion with the gods such as others did not enjoy, this requirement on the part of the king furnished a most excellent opportunity to prove the genuineness of their claims and to establish an enviable reputation for all future time; but when they were pressed, under threat of dire punishment, to reveal to the king his dream and its meaning, their occult system absolutely broke down, and they frankly confessed the failure of human wisdom: —

" There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." Dan. 2: 10, 11.

In his rage and disappointment King Nebuchadnezzar, with a possible realization of the imposture which had been practiced upon him, decreed the death of all the wise men of Babylon. In this moment of extreme peril the captive Daniel, who " had understanding in all visions and dreams " (Dan. 1: 17), on learning of the impending

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* One writer says: " That the Babylonians attached great importance to dreams, and made the vain science of oneiromancy a special study, is well known. Their history abounds in mention of remarkable dreams, and the sacred histories no less than others note them."— *Rule.*

fate of the wise men, " desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation."

He and his companions, recognizing their dependence upon the God of all wisdom, sought light from heaven; and " then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." Having thanked and praised the God of his fathers for having imparted light and wisdom to him, Daniel in the presence of the king confessed the failure of human wisdom in such a crisis, but declared " there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." He then related the king's dream: —

A Great Historic Outline

" Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

" This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

" Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

" Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2: 31-35.

Then the prophet immediately furnished the interpretation of the dream, as God had revealed it to him. He said: —

" Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Verses 37, 38.

There is no hesitancy, no circumlocution, no ambiguity,

in Daniel's interpretation. The meaning of the imposing image which Nebuchadnezzar saw is at once indicated. Its four main parts represent four great successive kingdoms. The first is the kingdom of Babylon. "Thou art this head of gold." *

Although the Hebrew captive is addressing earth's most powerful monarch, yet he does not hesitate to declare to him that his kingdom will pass away. Other kingdoms were to follow Babylon: —

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

"And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

"And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Dan. 2: 39-43.

The kingdom which succeeded Babylon was Medo-Persia; the "third kingdom of brass" was Grecia; "the fourth kingdom" was Rome.

The declaration of the prophet that "the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron" at once suggests the words

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* "To Nebuchadnezzar, at the then center of earthly greatness, God exhibits as his foreground the empire of the world as it should develop in its different stages, until it should be confronted at last by the kingdom of God, and universal obedience should be claimed, not by any one empire of this world, but by God in his kingdom."— *Pusey*. The material of which the head of the image was composed is peculiarly appropriate and suggestive. "The epithet 'golden' is descriptive, for it is historically certain that Babylon was the exactress of gold, as it is rendered in the margin of our Bible, beyond any other ruling city in the world. The wedge of gold and the embroidered garment found concealed in Achan's tent eight centuries and a half before Daniel interpreted this dream were brought from Babylon, the oldest city in the world, being richest in precious treasure."— *Rule*.

of the historian Gibbon: "The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." *

Well does Gibbon the historian describe it as "the iron monarchy of Rome," just as Daniel the prophet so long before foretold that it would have "the strength of the iron."

What Next in Our Day?

But the prophet saw that a change was to come in this fourth great world empire. "The kingdom shall be divided," he said. And, true to the word of God, the vast empire of Rome was divided by the incursions of the nations from northern Europe. Out of its territory were carved the kingdoms of Western Europe, very much as they have continued to this time. These kingdoms of the divided empire of Rome stand before our eyes today just as they were represented in the ancient prophecy — some strong, others weaker, not cleaving together again as one dominion, even though reigning houses are allied, but remaining separate kingdoms.

"In the days of these kings,"— these kingdoms still acting their part in world affairs,— the prophet declared that the great crisis of the ages would come: —

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and con-

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* Gibbon bears striking testimony to the iron despotism of this fourth kingdom: "There was not an inch of ground then known exempt from its scepter. The modern tyrant who should find no resistance in his own breast, or in his people, would soon experience a gentle restraint from the example of his equals, the dread of censure, the apprehension of enemies. The object of his displeasure escaping the narrow limits of his dominion, would easily obtain, in a happier climate, a secure refuge, freedom of complaint, and perhaps, means of revenge. But the empire of the Romans filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse, without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, he could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of fierce barbarians."

sume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Dan. 2: 44, 45.

True to the great prophetic outline, history has seen the passing of Babylon, of Medo-Persia, of Greece, and of Rome; it bears witness to the division of Rome into lesser kingdoms. Nothing has failed. And what next? — The voice of prophecy declares to us who live now —" in the days of these kings "— that the next great all-changing event will be the ending of the kingdoms of this world and the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom. And " the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Another Prophecy

Over this same course of empire, with additional striking features, we are taken in the vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel. This vision was given to the prophet " in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon," when the fall of Babylon was impending. The first portion of the prophet's own record of this vision reads as follows (and as we read it, let us bear in mind that in prophecy winds denote war, and the waters of the sea denote peoples and nations) : —

" I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

" The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

" And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Dan. 7: 2-8.

A divine messenger gave to the prophet in one brief statement the key for the interpretation of this portion of the symbolic vision: —

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." Verse 17.

"Here, then, must again be represented, not individual kings, but the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome symbolized by the four parts of the great image of Daniel 2. This is rendered certain by the specific application of the fourth symbol made by the divine interpreter: —

"The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth." Dan. 7: 23.

The lion, the king of beasts, corresponds to the head of gold, the most precious of metals; the second beast, the bear, represents the second kingdom, Medo-Persia; the leopard with four wings and four heads is the symbol of Grecia, with a special suggestion of the swiftness of Alexander's conquering expedition and the later division of his kingdom into four parts. The fourth beast, with "iron teeth," dreadful and terrible, treading down the whole earth, fitly represents the Roman Empire, that "iron monarchy" that followed Grecia. There is com-

THE FOUR BEASTS OF DANIEL 7

plete correspondence between the dream of Daniel 2 and the vision of Daniel 7.

The significance of the ten horns upon the fourth beast is a part of the divine interpretation furnished to us: —

"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise." Dan. 7: 24.

The division of the fourth kingdom, Rome, into ten minor kingdoms here predicted was accomplished in the fifth century by the inroads upon the Western Empire of Rome of the barbarian tribes from the north. At the end of about a century of conflict the territory of the once united Western Empire was broken up into ten parts, each constituting a separate kingdom.

The next scene presented to the prophet is one of intense interest and importance: —

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." Dan. 7: 9-12.

Here is foretold that event of transcendent importance which marks the close of the present phase of this world's history,— the judgment,— when "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." In his sermon on Mars Hill the apostle Paul announced to the men of Athens God's call to repentance, "because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness;" and later in his defense before Felix, this same minister of the gospel "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come."

That a work of judgment, an investigation of the record books of heaven, precedes the second coming of Christ to this world, fixing the eternal destiny of all, is plainly indicated in these words: —

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: . . . and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22: 11, 12.

While still the closing scenes were being enacted among the nations on earth, the prophet beheld that wondrous spectacle in heaven, the Ancient of days sitting in judgment.

That the establishment of the heavenly kingdom is now an imminent event is shown by a study of the prophecies which are being fulfilled in our own time. One prophecy plainly connects the setting up of the everlasting kingdom with the angry nations, the time of judgment and of giving of rewards. This is the announcement of the last angel in the series of seven covering the period from the inroads of the barbarians upon the Roman Empire to the end of all things earthly: —

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 15, 18.

The conditions here set forth are in striking harmony with the imagery used by the prophet Daniel in describing the smiting of the image by the stone "cut out without hands:"—

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them." Dan. 2: 35.

There is nothing here which warrants the view that the world will be converted and that thus the kingdom of this world will be transformed into the kingdom of God. On the contrary, we have here a picture of the grinding of the kingdoms of this world and their utter extinction, so "that no place was found for them."

In marked contrast with the brief existence allotted to other kingdoms is the enduring nature of the kingdom of God. They shall soon pass away, but "it shall stand forever."

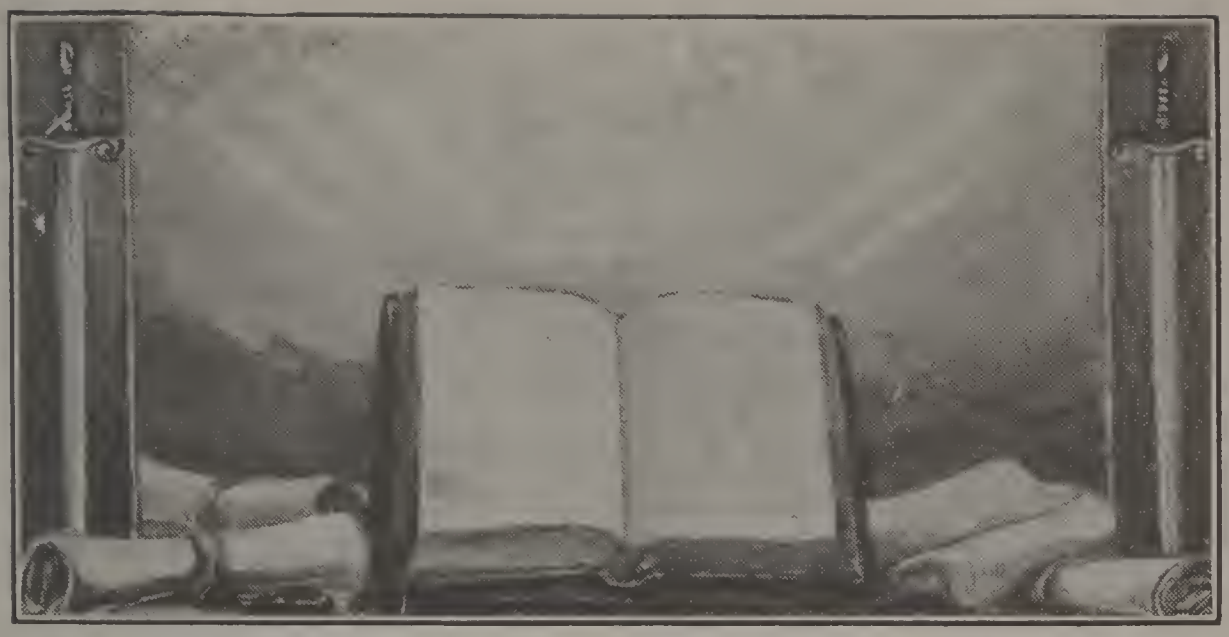
Of the coming of this kingdom the prophets have prophesied, the singers of Israel have sung, and the preachers of all ages have preached. For the coming of this kingdom the faithful of all ages have prayed, the persecuted of all ages have longed, and the Israel of all nations have hoped. Toward the coming of this kingdom the events of all the centuries have tended. Its long-looked-for establishment is the consummation of many lines of prophesy, and the conditions today in both the political and the religious world declare with the greatest emphasis that the course of earthly history is almost run, and that he whose right it is, is soon to reign.

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

"O that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all."

(62) THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT



CHAPTER V

THE PRIMITIVE FAITH THE STANDARD FOR THIS GENERATION

WITH the time near at hand for the setting up of the everlasting kingdom, it is incumbent upon us to give earnest heed to the principles of the kingdom, in which we must all desire to have a part when Christ shall come again. The call of the hour is for a return to the primitive simplicity of the faith of Jesus Christ.

The genuine gospel of salvation — the good news from God to man — was preached by Christ, the divine Teacher, and his apostles who were instructed by him. A clear light then shone upon earth, and the way to heaven was plainly pointed out.

Simplicity of the Primitive Faith

The simplicity of the primitive gospel is evident from the words of Christ and from the teaching of the apostles. There was the fullest recognition of man's sinfulness, of his utter inability to save himself, and there was the revelation of the great provision made for deliverance from the bondage of sin through the merits and atoning work of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Sin was not passed over lightly. It was rebellion against God, the transgression of his law, which separated man from God. Its penalty was death. Man's only hope was found in confession, repentance, forsaking sin, and accepting the Saviour provided. In contrast with the traditional legalism of the Jewish Church, the utter uselessness of mere forms and ceremonies and of so-called good works as a means of salvation was strongly emphasized in the apostolic church; and the doctrine that salvation was by grace through faith and the free gift of God was presented as fundamental to all Christian experience.

Such faith did not make void the law of God, but rather established it; did not release one from the penalty of transgressing God's law in order that he might continue in sin, but rather made the believer a partaker of the divine nature and enabled him to walk in obedience to the divine law. Men rescued from the dead forms of Judaism and from the superstitious darkness of heathenism, found the gospel to be indeed "the power of God unto salvation;" and the early Christian churches scattered throughout the Roman Empire were centers of light and power from which a transforming influence emanated, uplifting all who came within its reach.

The Apostolic Standard

There was only one standard for the Christian life, — the law of God as interpreted and applied to human experience by Christ himself. Acceptance with God did not come as the result of obedience to this law, but obedience was the fruit of that personal fellowship with God which brought a new power into the life, making the weak strong and lifting the fallen to the plane of harmony with the will of God. Multitudes were thus enabled to adopt as their personal testimony the words of the great apostle to the Gentiles: —

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8: 1-4.

Such was the experience of the early church when conformity to the world was utterly rejected, when persecution by a heathen power was often the lot of those who refused to compromise their faith, and when the utmost simplicity characterized both the organization and the administration of each separate company of believers. The church was then the bride of Christ, adorned with the robes of purity.

Prophetic Warnings of Peril to the Primitive Church

But both Christ and the apostles gave utterance to predictions and warnings which indicated the work of future false teachers and a consequent departure from the faith. In our Lord's great prophecy, a brief outline of the history of the church between the first and second advent, this experience is definitely foretold: —

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24: 24.

To this same effect are the words of the apostle Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus: —

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20: 28-30.

(66) JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHING REPENTANCE

The same apostle in some of his inspired letters writes in a somewhat similar vein: —

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." 2 Tim. 2: 16-18.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4: 3, 4.

The extent to which this departure from the faith would reach is clearly set forth: —

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." 2 Peter 2: 1, 2.

Perhaps the most notable of any of the predictions of a coming departure from the simplicity of the faith is that made by the apostle Paul in the following language: —

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." 2 Thess. 2: 1-7.

The Testimony of History

The influences adverse to the purity and loyalty of the church whose evil results began to appear before

the last of the apostles had finished his course, were held in check for a time by what might possibly be termed the friendly hand of persecution; but when in the early part of the fourth century there came that unholy alliance between the church and the state, the corruption of Christianity proceeded with great rapidity, and that first love which characterized the apostolic church was largely lost. In his preface to the "Ancient Church," Dr. W. D. Killen, of Ireland, bears this testimony: —

> In the interval between the days of the apostles and the conversion of Constantine, the Christian commonwealth changed its aspect. . . . Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions. Officers, for whom the primitive disciples could have found no place, and titles, which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention, and to be named apostolic.

In his "Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," Mosheim develops this outline at considerable length. We can quote only briefly some of his leading statements: —

> The whole Christian system was still comprised [in the second century] in a few precepts and propositions. . . . In their manner of handling these doctrines, there was nothing subtle, profound, or distant from common apprehension. . . . Yet insensibly, from this venerable simplicity, there was a considerable departure.— *Book 1, cent. 2, part 2, chap. 3, pars. 1, 2, edition 1850.*

> It is certain, that to religious worship, both public and private, many rites were added, without necessity, and to the offense of sober and good men. . . . There is good reason to suppose that Christian bishops multiplied sacred rites for the sake of rendering the Jews and the pagans more friendly to them.— *Id., chap. 4, pars. 1, 2, edition 1850.*

> How much harm was done to the Christian cause by these sophists or philosophers, inflated with a conceit of their own knowledge, and with hatred of the Christian name, appears from many examples in this century [the fourth], and especially from Julian, who was seduced by such men. Among those who would pass for the wiser sort, desirous to avoid extremes, many were induced, by the arguments and explanations of these men, to devise a kind of intermediate religion, made up of the old superstition and Christianity, persuading themselves that it was the very thing enjoined

by Christ, and that it had long been hidden by the pagan priests under the veil of ceremonies and fables.—*Book 2, cent. 4, part 1, chap. 1, par. 18, edition 1850.*

Those idle fictions, which a regard for the Platonic philosophy and for the prevailing opinions of the day had induced most theologians to embrace, even before the times of Constantine, were now in various ways confirmed, extended, and embellished. . . . Genuine piety was gradually supplanted by a long train of superstitious observances, which were derived, partly from opinions inconsiderately embraced, partly from a preposterous disposition to adopt profane rites and combine them with Christian worship, and partly from the natural predilection of mankind generally for a vain sort of ostentation in religion.—*Id., part 2, chap. 3, pars. 1, 2, edition 1850.*

Turning From the Word of God

The explanation of this departure from the simplicity of the gospel by the professed teachers of the truth is largely found in the fact that they turned from the Sacred Scriptures as the source of truth to the speculations of philosophy, the teachings of the Fathers, and the customs of the pagans. This is clearly stated in the following extracts from the same church historian: —

When they come to the proof of their positions, most of them do not resort to the law of God for arguments to enforce duty and put down vice, but to airy fancies, to frigid allegories, and finespun subtleties, better suited to tickle the imagination than to awaken and overpower the conscience.—*Id., par. 11, edition 1850.*

For that devout and venerable simplicity of the first ages of the church, which made men believe when God speaks, and obey when he commands, was thought by the chief doctors of this age to be only fit for clowns; . . . nor did they so much explain divine mysteries, as involve them in the perplexing folds of subtleties, ambiguous terms, and nice distinctions.—*Id., cent. 5, part 2, chap. 3, par. 1, edition 1850.*

It is very evident that the doctrines of religion were not exhibited with sufficient purity and simplicity by most persons; . . . and were substantiated, not so much by the declarations of the Holy Scriptures, as by the authority and logical reasonings of the ancient doctors.—*Id., par. 6, edition 1850.*

Among the most prominent changes in doctrine and practice brought in as the result of this neglect of the Scriptures as a standard of faith and practice, was the

substitution of the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week, enjoined in the fourth commandment.

Witness of Both Catholic and Protestant Writers

That there is no Scripture authority for this change of the Sabbath is admitted by many writers, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. We submit herewith a few extracts bearing upon this whole question: —

Dr. R. W. Dale (Congregationalist): "It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath." "The Sabbath was founded on a specific, divine command. We can plead no such command for the observance of Sunday." "There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday." — "*The Ten Commandments*," *London, Hodder & Stoughton, pages 106, 107.*

Dr. Isaac Williams (Church of England): "The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it."—"*Plain Sermons on the Catechism*," *London, Longmans & Co.*

Canon Eyton (Church of England): "There is no word, or hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday." "No commandment of God bids us do this or not do that on Sunday; we are absolutely free as far as his law goes." "The observance of Ash Wednesday or Lent stands on exactly the same footing as the observance of Sunday." "Constantine's decree was the first public step in establishing the first day of the week as a day on which there should be secular rest as well as religious worship. . . . Into the rest of Sunday no divine law enters."—"*The Ten Commandments*," *London, Trübner & Co.*

Prynne (old English writer): "The seventh day Sabbath was . . . solemnized by Christ, the apostles, and primitive Christians, till the Laodicean Council did, in a manner, quite abolish the observation of it. . . . The Council of Laodicea [A. D. 364] . . . first settled the observation of the Lord's Day."—"*Dissertation on the Lord's Day Sabbath*," *page 163.*

Dr. Hessey (Church of England): "I hold that the Lord's Day is, as to its origin, much on a par with confirmation. And this . . . would at once exclude it from the category of positive institutions

ordained by Christ himself." — "*Sunday, Its Origin, History, and Present Obligation,*" *London, John Murray, 1861, page 31.*

Morer (Church of England): "It is not to be denied but we borrow the name of this day from the ancient Greeks and Romans, and we allow that the old Egyptians worshiped the sun, and as a standing memorial of their veneration, dedicated this day to him. And we find by the influence of their examples, other nations, and among them the Jews themselves, doing him homage; yet these abuses did not hinder the Fathers of the Christian church simply to repeal, or altogether lay by, the day or its name, but only to sanctify and improve both, as they did also the pagan temples polluted before with idolatrous services, and other instances wherein those good men were always tender to work any other change than what was evidently necessary, and in such things as were plainly inconsistent with the Christian religion; so that Sunday being the day on which the Gentiles solemnly adored that planet, and called it Sunday, partly from its influence on that day especially, and partly in respect to its divine body (as they conceived it), the Christians thought fit to keep the same day and the same name of it, that they might not appear causelessly peevish, and by that means hinder the conversion of the Gentiles, and bring a greater prejudice than might be otherwise taken against the gospel."— "*Dialogues on the Lord's Day,*" *pages 22, 23.*

Cardinal Gibbons (Roman Catholic): "You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify." —"*Faith of Our Fathers,*" *Baltimore, John Murphy & Co., 1893, page 111.*

"*Catholic Mirror:*" "Of those who follow the Bible as their guide, the Israelites and Seventh-day Adventists have the exclusive weight of evidence on their side, whilst the Biblical Protestant has not a word in self-defense for his substitution of Sunday for Saturday."— *Sept. 9, 1893.*

Church Catechism (Roman Catholic): —

"*Question.* Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

"*Answer.* Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; — she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority." — "*A Doctrinal Catechism,*" *Rev. Stephen Keenan, New York, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, page 174.*

God's Own Witness

The commandment upon which any true Sabbath keeping must be based is positive and clear, and definitely names the day of rest: —

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20: 8-11.

Although there is no Scripture authority for the transfer of the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to any other day, there is in addition to those predictions which foretell a departure from the faith, a specific prophecy of a gospel movement for the restoration of the Sabbath of the Lord in the latter days: —

"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isa. 58: 12-14.

In harmony with this prophecy there has arisen in these closing years just previous to the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of God, a movement whose purpose is to call men back to apostolic standards and practices, adopting the old-time principle that the Bible is a sufficient rule of faith and practice. Inasmuch as the law of God is the rule of judgment (James 2: 12), it seems only proper that when the world is facing the judgment, a message, warning against apostasy and urg-

ing a return to primitive Christianity, should be sent to every nation under heaven.

In vision on the Isle of Patmos, the apostle John saw just such a movement preparing the way for the coming of the Lord. Rev. 14: 6-14. He outlined its nature and beheld the people gathered out from the world by it, whom he described in these words: —

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14: 12.

Tradition, or church creed, or the teaching of the Fathers does not constitute a reliable guide for the way of salvation. Tradition can be quoted for all sorts of error; church creeds contradict each other; and the teaching of the Fathers is often influenced by speculation and human philosophy.

There is no safe rule but God's Word, and God's Word claims to be the ONLY INFALLIBLE RULE. "To the law and to the testimony," the Israelitish church was directed to appeal. Jonah was commanded to preach the message that God had commanded. Paul spoke "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." And in sundry places, the infallibility of revealed truth, to the exclusion of mere reason, human decrees, tradition, and man's wisdom, is emphasized. Jesus reproved the ritualists of his time for teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and for making the Word of God of none effect through tradition. Every church ever since that founds any portion of its doctrines on the sands of patristic fancy, ecclesiastical deliverances, or traditional observances, makes the Word of God of none effect, and makes shipwreck of what faith it has.

Those who have noted with sadness the departure from old-time standards, and who long to see a restoration of the pure teaching of the gospel based upon the Word of God, should heed the call to a return to the old paths. This is the message for this time. Amidst the confusion and apostasy, God is calling out a people for himself, who will tremble at his Word, and who will place a "Thus saith the Lord" above any human authority.

(74) CHRIST COMING IN GLORY

CHAPTER VI

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

The World Waiting for Its Redeemer

NINETEEN centuries ago Jesus Christ walked among men in fulfillment of God's promise to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He was the Seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head, and who was to be himself bruised in the conflict.

The Promise of His First Coming

Centuries before Christ's first advent, God had declared concerning the promised Restorer: —

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." Micah 5: 2.

In Bethlehem he was born, in the fullness of time, heralded by angels, and pursued by the minions of Satan from the manger to the cross, rejected by those he had come to redeem, crucified by those he had come to save. Yet in him were the destiny of the world and the hope

of man. In fulfillment of God's promise and Christ's purpose we hear him saying of himself: —

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. . . . And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4: 18-21.

But Jesus, although he was Immanuel (God with us), did not, during his earthly ministry, put an end to sin and death in the world, or set up the literal kingdom of God in the earth, or give the eternal reward to his faithful children. He established the principles of that kingdom here, lived them out in his own life, attested them with his own blood, and left them to leaven the lump of this world until he should come again. He sent his followers into the world, armed with the great commission to sow the good seed of the gospel among all men, and then declared, "The harvest is the end of the world."

The Promise of His Second Coming

Near the end of his earthly ministry we hear him comforting the hearts of his troubled disciples with these words: —

"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14: 1-3, A. R. V.

This statement by our Saviour teaches us that his return from heaven is just as certain as his going away; and we have this record concerning his ascension to heaven: —

"And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And

while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." Acts 1: 9-11, A. R. V.

Luke records this promise, made by the lips of our Saviour himself: —

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21: 27.

Matthew records it thus: —

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24: 30.

Many other scriptures might be given, but these are sufficient to settle beyond controversy the fact that our Lord will return to this earth again. He will come again, the second time, not as an offering for sin, but as the conqueror of Satan and the rewarder of those who have proved faithful and loyal to the principles of the kingdom of righteousness. This is his testimony: —

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work is." Rev. 22: 12.

The whole sacrificial system of the old dispensation pointed forward to a time when the work of God in man's behalf would reach its culmination in the ingathering of the redeemed of all ages. The afflicted followers of the Prince of Peace have, through all the centuries, looked with longing eyes to the time when God would fulfill that promise, put an end to the reign of sin and death, and set up the kingdom of righteousness in its stead in this earth, which will have been renovated by fire and re-created by the mighty power of God. The time draws near when that promise of the Almighty will meet its fulfillment, when the hope of the ages will find

its fruition, when joy and peace and love shall fill the universe as the waters fill the sea.

The Manner of His Coming

The Word of God leaves no question as to whether Christ will come; but among many who believe he will come there is confusion as to the manner of his return.

THE WORLD'S ONLY HOPE FOR PEACE

Some believe that the death of each Christian is to such a one the coming of Christ. Some believe in a secret rapture of the saints; others, that he comes in the secret chamber of the spiritualistic séance. Others, again, believe they see his coming in the great religious federations of our day. They would usher in the eternal kingdom of righteousness through the direct control of civil affairs by religious combinations.

None of these ideas harmonize with the plain declara-

tions of the Bible. We are told in the book of Revelation: —

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1: 7.

There can be nothing secret about such a coming. One will not have to tell another that Christ has come; for "every eye shall see him." Some will view that wondrous spectacle with joy unspeakable, and others with terror indescribable: —

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." Matt. 16: 27. "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24: 30. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9: 26.

He comes in the clouds of heaven in glory — in his own glory, in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of the holy angels — and "every eye shall see him." Can we imagine that any human being will be in doubt as to what is taking place when that marvelous spectacle appears in the heavens? But these are not the only specifications which the Bible gives us concerning the manner of our Saviour's return. Let inspiration, through the apostle Paul, again testify: —

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4: 16.

When Jehovah spoke on Sinai, the earth shook, the people trembled with fear, and they besought Moses to have the Lord speak with him and not with them, lest they die. But when the voice of Jehovah speaks from the clouds of heaven, when the Archangel adds his voice, and when the trump of God sounds from the sky, such terror as human hearts have never known will seize the

sinners of this world. In the book of Revelation we have a description of this phase of that event: —

"The kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?" Rev. 6: 15-17, A. R. V.

There will be no question then in the minds of any as to the nature of the event that is taking place. All human theories vanish in the presence of that sublime reality. It is not seen by a few only; it is not localized. Our Saviour himself says of that event: —

"As the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." Matt. 24: 27, A. R. V.

The magnificent glory of that event will flood the whole earth with its blinding and penetrating radiance. To the righteous it will be the glad day of a finished warfare, a fulfilled hope. The wicked cannot look upon it but for a moment; for they will be destroyed "with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. 2: 8.

Events of His Coming

Christ will not come back to this earth until earth's inhabitants have had an opportunity to accept or reject him. In speaking of that event to his disciples, he said: —

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

When that work of evangelism has been accomplished, God will flash into our sky some token of the close of that work and the imminence of the end. He says: —

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24: 30, 31.

That is God's harvest gathered out of this sin-polluted world. Says Jesus: "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." Matt. 13: 39. It is the fulfillment of that scripture written centuries ago: —

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is Jehovah; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa. 25: 9.

The saints that have been held in the embrace of death are gathered by those angel messengers to enter upon their reward with those accounted righteous who have not tasted death. This is taught by inspiration in these words: —

"We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 15-17, A. R. V.

But what of the wicked? The apostle Paul bears this testimony concerning them: —

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict you; and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." 2 Thess. 1: 6-10, A. R. V.

The Millennium

The consuming glory of Christ's second coming leaves the wicked slain upon the earth; the saints are taken by

their Saviour to the mansions of the blest; but this is not the end of God's dealings with sin.

The fires of God's vengeance leave this earth a desolate waste, a charnel house of ruin. With none to deceive, Satan is bound here for a millennium (a thousand years). During this same time the redeemed are with

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

their Redeemer in heaven, and a work of judgment is given to them. Rev. 20: 4.

At the end of the thousand years, the wicked dead are raised in the second resurrection. Rev. 20: 5. With the resurrection of the wicked, Satan has subjects upon whom to ply his arts again. Thus he is loosed for a time, deceives those who have come up in the second resurrection, the mighty nations of the lost, and induces them to make an attack upon the city of the saints. For then the New Jerusalem has come down to earth from heaven, as John saw it descending in vision —" that great city,

the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Rev. 21: 10. As the mighty hosts of Satan come up over " the breadth of the earth " to the attack, fire comes down out of heaven and devours them. Rev. 20: 1-15.

That is the end of sin and sinners and of the one who instigated sin. It closes the long struggle between righteousness and iniquity. It closes forever the fountain of misery and sorrow in this world, and brings in everlasting peace and happiness. It is the fruition of the " blessed hope " that has cheered pilgrim and martyr through all the history of the world. With such a prospect before him, surely the faithful child of God can say with the beloved disciple, " Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

" Watchman, tell me, does the morning
Of fair Zion's glory dawn?
Have the signs that mark its coming
Yet upon thy pathway shone?
Pilgrim, yes! arise, look round thee;
Light is breaking in the skies;
Gird thy bridal robes around thee,
Morning dawns, arise! arise!"

CHAPTER VII

SIGNS OF THE APPROACHING END

WILL there be signs by which all may know when Christ's second coming is near at hand? — There surely will; for Christ himself declared: —

"And there shall be signs." Luke 21: 25.

We must watch for them, then. And a solemn fact appears the moment we study the prophecy. We see that many of these signs have already come to pass, of which Christ tells us: —

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21: 28.

Seated with his disciples on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem, Christ gave an outline of events reaching to his glorious appearing in the clouds of heaven. Looking down upon the city of Jerusalem, all careless of its time of visitation, Christ had foretold the destruction of the sacred temple. The disciples, astonished, said, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" and, evidently associating the end of the earthly temple with the end

(86) SIEGE OF JERUSALEM, A. D. 70

of the world, they added, "and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24: 1-3.

The Saviour's answer is equally for us who live in these latter days. Briefly he sketched the scenes of confusion and tumult that were to follow quickly in their own time, as the doom predicted by the prophets of old should fall upon Jerusalem. The signs that he gave meant deliverance and escape to the Christian believers in the day of Jerusalem's fall. Christ forewarned them: —

"When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. . . . And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21: 20-24.

The unbelieving of Jerusalem and Judea could not conceive such a thing as the destruction of the favored city; but at the first compassing of Jerusalem by the Roman armies the Christians recognized the sign and knew that the fateful day was at hand; and when for a time the siege was suddenly lifted and the armies retired, the believers heeded the warning and fled to safety. Watching the signs of the times and being ready, they were delivered when the day of desolation came a few years later. Even so are we to watch the signs of our own times, that we may escape the things coming upon the earth, and "stand before the Son of man."

Having foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolations that would attend it, Christ's prophetic discourse answered the second part of the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The prophet Daniel had foretold a time of great tribulation that was to come upon the

church, with persecution of the saints of God through long, dark centuries until the time of the end. The Saviour's prophetic vision reviewed this long period. "Then shall be great tribulation," he said, "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." But for the elect's sake, he said, for the sake of the Lord's people and the cause of truth on earth, those days were to be shortened.

Even so the rise of the reform movements of the sixteenth century and onward, and the spreading abroad of the Word of God among the people, cut short the days of tribulation, and brought the dawn of the era of light and knowledge that was to come with the time of the end, according to the Lord's word to Daniel the prophet: —

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12: 4.

Next the Saviour's prophecy begins to deal with the signs by which believers may know when the end is drawing near. That no false theories of a secret coming of the Lord or of a quiet breaking of a millennium on earth might deceive those who are awakened to watch, the Saviour first of all describes the manner of his coming, and warns against teachings that were to arise in the last days advocating a mystical, secret second advent: —

The Warning — Christ's Coming Visible to All

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24: 23-27.

Hastily, in few words, let us review the prophetic outline, watching to catch the true signals as earnestly as

the mariner strains the eye to read surely the shore beacons on a dark night. The signs cannot fail us, for Christ said: —

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21: 25-28.

He that hath eyes to see, let him see these signs of his coming Lord: —

1. *Signs in the heavens.*

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven." Matt. 24: 29.

These signs began to appear at the appointed time, "immediately after the tribulation of those days."

"The Sun Shall Be Darkened"

On May 19, 1780, came the wonderful darkening of the sun, known in the list of unexplained phenomena as "the dark day" of 1780. Thoughtful hearts were impressed that the mysterious darkening of the sun was a sign from heaven.

The following statement probably gives as good an account of this phenomenon as can be condensed into so brief a space: —

"The nineteenth of May, 1780, was unprecedented in New England for its great darkness. . . . The darkness extended over several thousand square miles. . . . Nowhere, perhaps, was it greater than in this vicinity. The day was appropriately called and is still known as the Dark Day."—*From "History of the Town of Hampton, New Hampshire," by Joseph Dorr, Salem, Mass. Printed by the Salem Press and Printing Co., 1893, Vol. I, page 217. (Boston Public Library.)*

The Connecticut House of Representatives, adjourned when the great darkness came on. Similar action was

suggested in the upper chamber, or senate, when a Mr. Davenport rose in his place, urging that the session continue: —

> Mr. Speaker, it is either the day of judgment, or it is not. If it is not, there is no need of adjourning. If it is, I desire to be found doing my duty. I move that candles be brought, and that we proceed to business.

"And the Moon Shall Not Give Her Light"

Though at the time the moon was only a few hours past the full, it gave no light, thus fulfilling the words of Matt. 24: 29: "And the moon shall not give her light." R. M. Devins says: —

> The darkness of the following evening was probably as deep and dense as ever had been observed since the Almighty fiat gave birth to light; it wanted only palpability to render it as extraordinary as that which overspread the land of Egypt in the days of Moses.— *Article "Our First Century," in "Great and Memorable Events." See pages 89-96.* (*Boston Public Library.*)

"And the Stars Shall Fall From Heaven"

Years passed, and men's hearts were stirred as they studied the Word and saw that the great historic prophecies taught that the coming of the Lord was drawing near. In Europe and in America there was a revival of the preaching of the advent idea by thousands of ministers of all denominations. Just here came another great sign to cause men to give heed to the significance of passing events.

On Nov. 13, 1833, came the thrilling display of falling stars, which is listed as one of the remarkable phenomena of the astronomical story. The following descriptive paragraph is attributed to Professor Olmsted, of the astronomical department of Yale College, who witnessed the scene and was led by it to give special study to the phenomena of "falling stars" or meteorites: —

> Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of Nov. 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fireworks that has ever been since the creation of the world, or at least within the annals covered by the

pages of history. . . . The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface. From the middle of the Atlantic on the east to the Pacific on the west, and from the northern coast of South America to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance.

It was indeed such a picture as that described among latter-day events by John in the Revelation: —

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as the fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6: 13.

Over the whole Atlantic coast, from New England to the South, men witnessed what one writer describes as the greatest spectacle "ever beheld by man;" and an observer living at the time in Georgia wrote: "Everybody felt that it was the judgment, and that the end of the world had come." Rather was it a signal that the hour of God's judgment was drawing near at hand; for very clearly the Scriptures tell us that the time of the last generation is to be the judgment hour in heaven. Every case comes in review as the records of heaven are opened both of the living and of the dead; for when Christ comes, the judgment has already determined to all eternity who are the righteous and who are the wicked. These signs, therefore, were to warn men to prepare for the judgment hour, and to arouse the church of Christ to do the work that must be done in proclaiming the gospel message just before the end.

2. *Signs in the social and industrial world.*

"And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21: 25, 26.

The prophet James describes latter-day conditions with a warning to the careless rich, and a warning also to the laborer and the poor not to be drawn into strife and contention for this world's possessions while the judgment

hour is passing in heaven above and the righteous Judge is at the door: —

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your

A TYPICAL STRIKE SCENE

fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." James 5: 1-9.

It is well known that some of the nations have felt that only a plunge into war could for the moment heal the dis-

sensions due to social discontent and industrial strife. Yet war can but intensify the conditions, and impoverish the survivors. But a few years ago Lord Avebury, better known as Sir John Lubbock, discussing the impoverishing of the European countries by preparation for war, said in "Review of Internationalism:"—

> The religion of Europe is not Christianity, but the worship of the god of war. . . . Unless something is done, the condition of the poor in Europe will grow worse and worse. It is no use shutting our eyes. Revolution may not come soon, not probably in our time, but come it will, and as sure as fate there will be an explosion such as the world has never seen.

Mr. Frederick Townsend Martin, of New York, wrote an earnest warning concerning these conditions, in *Hearst's Magazine* for September, 1913. Addressing his words to the "idle rich," he said: —

> The Romans were overconfident, and they were swept from the earth. The French overdid the thing, and rivers of blood flowed. The English again and again have forced the workers into open rebellion. All countries, including ours, seem ripe for revolution.
>
> Fifty years ago there was scarcely a voice of protest; indeed, there was hardly anything to protest against. Twenty-five years ago the protest was clear and distinct, and we understood it. Ten years ago the protest found expression in a dozen weekly publications; but today the protest is circulated not by hundreds or thousands of printed copies of books, pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers, but actually by the million.
>
> This propaganda of protest has its daily papers that are distinctive and published for that purpose, and that purpose only. It has its magazines and tens of thousands of weekly papers. Only a fool sneers at such a volume of publicity as that. . . .
>
> The warnings that hundreds of us are uttering may be ignored. The squandering may go on, the vulgar bacchanalia may be prolonged, the poor may have to writhe under the iron heel of the iron lord — the dance of death may go on until society's "E" string snaps, and then the Vesuvius of the underworld will belch forth its lava of death and destruction. Anarchy may reign for a period, values may be cast aside, reason may be flung to the winds, and history may reenact one of its red dramas; then out of the chaos and disorder will come, as there always has come, a new society.

But this time, we know by the sure word of prophecy, there will come, not a new order of things on earth, but

the utter end of this wicked, warring world, with the destruction of sin and sinners.

3. *Signs in the political world,— the arming of the nations.*

As the hour of God's judgment came in heaven, according to the view of the prophet, he saw the nations

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WORK OF A SHELL AT YPRES

rousing to the strife, and heard voices in heaven crying: —

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged." Rev. 11: 18.

The prophet Daniel describes this judgment scene in heaven that closes Christ's ministry before his second coming. (See Dan. 7: 9, 10.) This investigative judgment begins with the dead, reviewing every case as recorded in the books above, and closing with the cases of the living. While this solemn work is proceeding in the

heavenly temple, on earth the nations are angry, preparing war, as the prophet Joel long ago said; waking up the mighty men, even the weak saying, I am strong; turning plowshares, or the products of the field, into swords. This is the picture that prophecy gives of the last days. And the prophecy says also that while the nations are fulfilling this word, multitudes of the thoughtless and the

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BELGIANS FLEEING FROM THE WAR ZONE

unprepared will be crying, " Peace and safety," and talking about beating swords into plowshares and learning war no more.

To talk for peace and to work for peace is blessed; but it must be recognized that only as men are converted to God by the gospel of Christ and become obedient through his grace to God's holy law can real peace ever reign in the individual heart. An unconverted world cannot be at peace. And the " sure word " tells us that in the last

days evil men shall "wax worse and worse." To talk of coming peace and safety in a sinful world rushing on to its end is to lull souls into a false security. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh." 1 Thess. 5: 3.

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THE RETURN HOME IN EAST PRUSSIA

4. *The most joyful sign,— the gospel message to the world.*

Surest and brightest and gladdest of all signs of the coming of the Lord is the world-wide missionary movement, sending the light shining into every dark corner of the earth. Christ's own word declared: —

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

What does it mean? — It means that the time of the prophecy has come; and while the nations are preparing

for the final conflict, the message of the gospel of peace must reach the yet unevangelized peoples in all the dark portions of the earth. About 22,000 missionaries are in the field, and many thousands of trained native converts are spreading the Word of God. This remarkable development has come in our time, and is a fulfillment of prophecy.

"GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD"

The last century has been a century of missionary activity, culminating in a truly world-wide work in our own time. Century after century passed after these prophecies were uttered, and the world saw no such movement. But with the coming of the latter days we have seen just such a world-wide gospel movement as the prophecy demands for the time of the last generation.

The last phase of this gospel work, according to the vision given John in the Revelation, was to be the rise

of a movement proclaiming the soon coming of the Lord, declaring the hour of God's judgment come, and calling all men — in Christendom as well as in heathendom — to take their stand upon the New Testament platform of "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Read the plain and graphic description of the movement in Rev. 14: 6-14, ending with the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven.

When the time of this generation came, this special gospel movement of the prophecy arose; and the special reform message of the prophecy is being carried swiftly to all the world today. We thank God for what all the great missionary societies are doing to spread the gospel of Christ's kingdom. But the "sure word" demands that in these last times there shall be this special closing proclamation of "the everlasting gospel;" for when this gospel of the kingdom has reached all peoples with its call to prepare to meet the Lord, the day of human probation closes; then quickly must come the loosing of the four winds, the great battle of the day of God Almighty, the quaking of the earth, the coming of the Lord, the destruction of sin, and the eternal salvation of all who have put their trust in God and have put away their sins through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Law of God

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

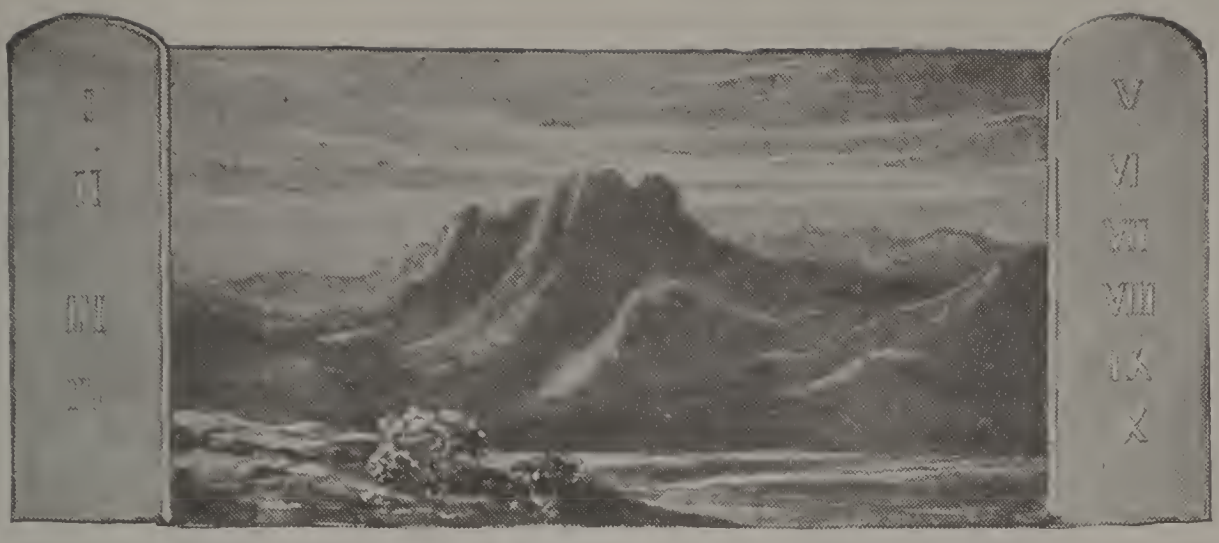
Thou shalt not steal.

IX

-Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.



MOUNT SINAI

CHAPTER VIII

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE FOR THIS GENERATION

The Judgment Hour: What It Involves. The Standard of Judgment

WE have reached portentous times in earth's history. Conditions in the physical, social, political, and religious worlds indicate that startling changes are soon to take place. What message do these conditions bear to earth's inhabitants?

By the signs in the heavens, by conditions on the earth, by the great preparation of the nations for war, by the development to another stage of the Eastern Question, by the combinations which are forming in society and in the great religious world,— by all these and other indications God would have us understand that we have reached the closing days of earth's history. "The hour of his judgment is come," and soon the nations of men will be called upon to render their account to God.

Special Messages of the Past

God has sent to his church in the past special messages of warning. The prophet declares: —

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3: 7.

Through Noah, the Lord gave to the antediluvian world a warning of the coming flood. For one hundred and twenty years this faithful preacher of righteousness warned his fellows of the judgment soon to be visited upon the earth. But the great multitude rejected his message. By a few it was received; and these, with him, were preserved in the ark.

JONAH PREACHING TO NINEVEH

Lot warned the inhabitants of the cities of the plain of their coming overthrow, but the record is that "he seemed as one that mocked."

Jonah became God's special messenger of warning to the inhabitants of Nineveh. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," was the message which he bore to that great city. Its inhabitants trembled at the word of the Lord, and the entire population, from the king on his throne to the most lowly subject, put on sackcloth and humbled themselves before God. Heaven, in infinite

mercy, averted the threatened judgment and spared their lives.

When the time came for Christ to be revealed to men, a message was sent of God to prepare the way before him. John the Baptist was raised up to proclaim it — "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." His message was a call to repentance and reform in order to be ready. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

God's Message for This Generation

The Scriptures of Truth declare that when the closing days of earth's history have been reached another message will go to the world. Says the Lord, through his prophet: —

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2: 1.

This message of the coming of the Lord is a message to prepare for the judgment. It calls men to turn to God, for "the hour of his judgment is come." Men have turned away from God and from his service to the worship of self and of mammon. The message bids them return. The inspired writer declares of the gospel message for the last generation: —

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14: 6, 7.

The Standard of Judgment

Not only does the Lord send to the world a judgment-hour message, but he points out the manner in which men may prepare for that judgment. In doing this he calls attention to the standard of the judgment, by which their lives and characters will be measured. This stand-

ard is God's holy law. By it men are to be judged in the last great day. Says the apostle: —

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2: 12.

In this law is comprehended the whole duty of man: —

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

"THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME"

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12: 13, 14.

Christ Did Not Abrogate the Law

Every principle of this law must be upheld by the divine government. No part of it has ever been abrogated. It remains as unchangeable and as inviolable as when spoken by the blessed Master from the blazing peaks of Mt. Sinai. Our Saviour declared in his Sermon on the Mount: —

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you,

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5: 17-19.

And to this testimony the apostle adds: —

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2: 10-12.

A study of this holy law, the ten commandments, reveals the fact that in the religious practice of Christendom, the great majority are out of harmony with its divine requirements, particularly in the matter of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. In place of the day made holy by God and enjoined by the fourth precept of his holy law, another day has been substituted. But this change has never been recognized by the divine Author. He established the Sabbath institution in the beginning as a memorial of his creative work, and so long as the heaven and the earth shall endure, just so long will this memorial stand.

Christ the Author of the Sabbath

Jesus Christ is set forth in the Word of Truth as the Creator of all things. Col. 1: 15-18; John 1: 1-3. As Creator he is the Author and Lord of the Sabbath institution. Mark 2: 27, 28.

The steps by which the Sabbath was brought into existence are clearly set forth in the Scriptures: —

"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Gen. 2: 2, 3.

By three distinct acts the Creator set apart the seventh day as a day of sacred rest: (1) "He rested on the seventh day." This made the seventh day the rest day of the Lord. (2) He "blessed the seventh day." This blessing exalted the seventh day of the week above any of its fellows in the weekly cycle. It constituted it holy time. (3) He "sanctified it." The word sanctify means to set apart for a sacred or holy use. For whose use did the Lord set apart the Sabbath? — Undoubtedly for the use of the human family. It was given to Adam, and through him to all his posterity. "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2: 27. Every man ought, then, to accept the gift that God made for him.

It should be noted in this connection that the Sabbath was established before sin entered the world. It, therefore, had no organic connection with the system of sacrificial offerings and types and ceremonies which were given in consequence of sin. These shadows of things to come might cease, and did cease, when type met antitype in the death of Christ; but the Sabbath of Jehovah ever remained, a memorial of God's creative work. The Sabbath was instituted in the beginning, ages before the Jews existed as a nation, and therefore it did not belong specifically to the Jewish economy.

As a part of the divine law, the Sabbath institution was observed throughout the patriarchal days. It was kept by Abraham, the father of the faithful. Gen. 26: 5. It was an institution well known to the Jewish people before their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and before the law was spoken by the Lord's own voice at Sinai; for when the people transgressed the Sabbath as they journeyed toward the mount, the Lord charged them with having "long" refused to obey his laws. Ex. 16: 27-30. This he could not justly have done if his commandments had not been clearly made known and if the obligation to observe them had not been fully understood.

The Sabbath a Part of the Moral Law

When, in order that his people might know more perfectly his divine requirements, the Majesty of heaven descended on the blazing peaks of Mt. Sinai, and gave expression to his divine will, afterward writing his law on tables of stone, we find that the Sabbath institution was made a part of these great moral precepts. It was placed in the very bosom of the decalogue, as if the Lord would shield it from the assaults of error, and by its association with other great moral principles forever settle in the minds of mankind its moral character.

The commandment reads as follows: —

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20: 8-11.

Not only is the Sabbath a memorial of creation, but it is a sign of the work of re-creation wrought through Jesus Christ in the regeneration and sanctification of his children. "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Ex. 31: 13. In this is revealed its spiritual and eternal character.

Because of their disregard for his holy day, Israel was brought into bondage, and Jerusalem was destroyed. See Jer. 17: 21-27; 2 Chron. 36: 14-21.

Christ and the Apostles Kept the Seventh-Day Sabbath

When Christ came to earth, he sought to restore the Sabbath to its rightful place in the regard and observance of his chosen people. He taught that it was lawful, or in harmony with the divine law, to do well on the Sab-

bath day. Matt. 12: 1-12. He employed the day in loving ministry to those who came to him. It was customary for Christ himself to take part in religious services on that day: —

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4: 16.

Those disciples most intimately connected with the

THE LORD OF THE SABBATH, MATT. 12: 8

blessed Master continued the observance of the Sabbath after the close of his earthly ministry. On that eventful crucifixion day preceding the Sabbath of the Lord, after they had laid the body of the Master in the tomb, the disciples returned to their homes to prepare spices and ointments for his anointing. Unable to complete their preparations before the beginning of the Sabbath, they rested from their labors till the Sabbath was past. Luke 23: 56. Early on the first day of the week they went to the sepulcher to perform a service which they would not do on the Sabbath of the Lord. Luke 24 [illegible].

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, some years after the passion of our Saviour, observed the seventh-day Sabbath in a manner similar to that followed by the Lord. At Thessalonica he entered into the synagogue, and "as his manner was," for three Sabbaths preached to the assembled people the gospel message. Acts 17: 1-3. Later, at Corinth, the Scriptural record states that he "reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Acts 18: 4, 11. And not only did he meet with Jews on this day, but with the Gentiles as well. Acts 13: 42-44. And as he practiced in regard to the Sabbath commandment, even so he taught. He inquired, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" Answering his own question, he emphatically states, "God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3: 31.

No Bible Authority for First-Day Observance

In contrast with this special regard shown the seventh day, we have the striking fact that not a single intimation is given in the New Testament Scriptures that the first day should be observed as the Sabbath. The first day of the week is mentioned eight times in the New Testament, but it is never called a holy day or the Sabbath day, nor is any sacredness whatever attached to it by any Bible writer.

As neither Christ nor his apostles changed the Sabbath to the first day of the week, who has wrought the change? For a knowledge of this we must look outside of the sacred record, and to a later period than that of Christ or his apostles. But while the Scriptures of Truth contain no record of the change, they do indicate that a change would be made. Dan. 7: 25; 2 Thess. 2: 1-4.

When and How the Sabbath Was Changed

The apostle Paul taught that in his day the mystery of iniquity, or "lawlessness," was already at work in the

church. At a later period we find this mystery developing into a great ecclesiastical system which, ignoring the precepts of the Master, laid ruthless hands upon the law of God, and tore from it the holy rest day, substituting in its place a sabbath of its own creation.

These changes were brought about slowly. During the early centuries both the seventh and the first day of the week were observed by the Christian church. Sunday was celebrated at first as an ordinary church festival, the same as Good Friday, Christmas, etc., making appeal for support to ecclesiastical authority, and not to Scriptural injunction. Indeed, to Scriptural authority it could not appeal, for nowhere in the Bible is the observance of the first day of the week enjoined either by precept or by example.

"Opposition to Judaism," says the historian, a desire to gain favor with their heathen neighbors, with motives of expediency and patriotism, led to the exaltation of the festival dedicated by the heathen world to the veneration of the sun, in the place of the true Sabbath.

The decree of Constantine, in A. D. 321, required its observance on the part of "judges and townspeople, and the occupation of all trades" in the cities; but permitted usual labor in the country. The decree of the Council of Laodicea, in A. D. 364, ordering that "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but the Lord's Day they shall especially honor," gave increased impetus to first-day observance. But "down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish * Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued."—"*Ancient Christianity Exemplified,*" *by Lyman Coleman, chap. 26.* But

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* While men may call it "Jewish," God calls it, not the Sabbath of the Jews, but, "The Sabbath of the Lord thy God," "My holy day," etc.

God left not his truth without witness in the earth, for some in every age have observed the true rest day.

The Final Issue and Test

When we come down to the closing days of earth's history, where fulfilling prophecies clearly show that we are now living, the Scriptures of Truth indicate that there will go to the world a great reform message regarding the law of God, and particularly that part of the law relating to the Sabbath commandment. That message is now being proclaimed by voice and pen to earth's remotest bounds. The attention of the world is being called to the downtrodden Sabbath of the Lord, which the prophecy represents as the seal of the living God. Rev. 7: 1-4; Isa. 56: 1-8.

At the same time, the Scriptures of Truth clearly show that in the last days of earth's history an earnest effort will be made through legal enactment to force Sunday observance, the mark of human authority, upon the consciences of men, as opposed to the mark or sign of the God of heaven, which he declares to be his holy Sabbath. Rev. 13: 11-18. We see a literal fulfillment of that prophecy in the efforts which are now being made to secure the enactment of Sunday laws by the Congress of the United States, and by the agitation attending this question in other parts of the world. But the Word of God gives positive warning that those who, after knowing the teaching of the Scriptures, ruthlessly reject the Sabbath of the Lord, disregarding its holy requirements and giving their allegiance to the counterfeit sabbath, shall receive God's everlasting displeasure. Rev. 14: 6-14.

Salvation by Grace and Not by Works

This controversy over the Sabbath of the Lord will prove a test of character to every believer. Not by the keeping of the law can one earn the favor of God. The

power of obedience comes only by grace, through faith. Salvation is the free gift of God through Christ Jesus. Says the apostle Paul: —

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2: 8, 9.

Jesus Christ was sent into the world to save men from sin. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1: 21. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3: 4. Says the apostle, "I had not known sin, but by the law" (Rom. 7: 7); and he inquires, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" To this he replies, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Rom. 6: 1, 2.

By Christ's Spirit every precept of the holy law is written in the heart of the believer. This is the promise of the New Covenant, our only hope. Heb. 8: 10. By the power of the indwelling Christ, the believer is enabled to express this law in his life. Gal. 2: 20. Of this new creation and the spiritual rest in Christ the Sabbath becomes a sign. Ex. 31: 12-17.

Many of the children of God in the ages of the past have observed in all good conscience the first day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord. God accepted the sincere purpose of their hearts. That spirit of consecration to God which led them to observe the day which they believed to be the Sabbath of the Lord, would have led them to the keeping of the true Sabbath had they received light upon the question. To them the message of God for this day and generation had not come. It was not then due. But now the hour of God's judgment has come, and the message of the judgment hour comes to us in these days of fulfilling prophecy. To this last gospel message, and to our relation to Christ, our Saviour, in these perilous times, we need to give diligent heed.

Walking as Christ Walked

Reader, on which side of this controversy will you stand? Will you obey the law of the Lord Jesus Christ by following his example in keeping holy the day which he has ordained, or will you give your allegiance to the counterfeit sabbath which has been set up in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord? How will you stand when your case is called in the great judgment, and your life is compared with the divine law? This is not a question merely of theological difference and discussion. It is a question of obedience to our Lord and Master. He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. Let us show our love for the Lord Christ, who died that we might live, by walking in his footsteps and doing as he did when he lived among men. To us as to his disciples of old he says, "Follow me."

CHAPTER IX

THE HOME OF THE REDEEMED

EVER since Adam forfeited Eden, the true child of God has been looking forward with longing heart to the time of the restoration. All the sin and sorrow, all the heaped-up misery of this worn-out world, are but the legacy of man's disloyalty and disobedience under the test of temptation in the home of our first parents. On the other hand, all the joys and satisfaction that come to the redeemed in the glad day of the restoration come through the loyalty and obedience of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, the Restorer of all things.

Our first parents fell, and we inherit death. They fell, and the world went under the dominion of him who is at once the enemy of God and man. Then the working of that decree of death began to show itself in withering leaf and fading flower, in slower step, in wrinkling brow, in whitening hair. The thorn and thistle, emblems of hate and injury, sprang up on every hand and flourished until one day cruel hands, under Satan's instigation, platted into a crown that emblem of God's curse and pressed it down upon the sinless brow of him who was to redeem and to restore.

In Eden God declared to the disobedient pair, and to all their posterity through them, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and "cursed is the ground for thy sake." It was a dreadful sentence that placed the stamp of death on all who should be born into this world, and the curse of sin upon the home of man; but disobedience is rebellion, and rebellion against the government of God would wreck the universe of God if he should permit it to go on unchecked. It was a dark prospect that loomed before Adam; but God did not leave the cloud of man's woe without its silver lining. In the promise which God made to Adam (Gen. 3:15) there is the promise both of man's redemption and of the restoration of his inheritance.

God gave this world to man; but when man permitted Satan to triumph over him, he became the servant of Satan, and all that man possessed went with him under bondage to the king of death. On this ground Satan said to Christ in the temptation in the wilderness, when he showed him the kingdoms of this world: "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." Luke 4:5, 6.

But the second Adam did not fail nor falter. He had come to do God's will, and he could not work that out by any program which Satan might propose. The attitude of Jesus toward God's purpose was this: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." And because he did not fail; because he did no sin; because he gave his life a spotless sacrifice for the race — the purpose of God both for man and for this world will be wrought out in him.

It was not God's purpose that this world should be filled with thorns, thistles, and poisonous weeds, or that it should be scarred and marred and torn by earthquake, flood, avalanche, and cyclone, nor that the human race

should suffer from disease, famine, pestilence, poverty, and woe. Therefore in the restoration these afflictions of the race and of the home of the race will not be found. We will learn from the Word of God what his purpose is. He says: —

"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." Isa. 45: 18.

The psalmist tells us in whose possession God placed it: —

"The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men." Ps. 115: 16.

It is inconceivable that God should permit his purpose to be permanently frustrated by the powers of evil, and we know, from his own Word, that his purpose will be carried out to the letter, even though for a time Satan may seem to triumph here and may exercise dominion over this planet, which was given to man. The Creator tells us of his purpose in these words: —

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." Micah 4: 8.

The tower of the flock is Christ; "the first dominion" is the dominion that was lost to the "flock" when man, through obedience to Satan, permitted his dominion to pass into the hands of the usurper and deceiver.

In the New Testament also God declares his purpose in this matter: —

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5: 5.

The psalmist expresses the same thought: —

"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 37: 11.

Under the present condition of things that promise could not be fulfilled. Meekness is no guaranty of wealth or possessions or even of common rights in this present world.

But there is coming a time of great and sudden change. When the opening heavens reveal the Son of God coming in all his glory to reward his saints (the meek of the earth), and to punish those who have persisted in unrighteousness, those who have selfishly piled up their thousands and their millions will fling their gold and silver to the moles and to the bats (Isa. 2: 20), and cry for mercy, while they seek to hide from him whose ways they have despised and whose followers they have oppressed. At that time this scripture will be fulfilled: —

"The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. . . . The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 7-13, A. R. V.

And Jesus himself, speaking to us through the apostle John, says: "Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21: 5. If this world was beautiful when it was first given to man for his home, it will be beautiful again when it is given to man for his eternal home, for an inheritance which will never pass away. The renovating work of the fires of God's vengeance will be so complete that no trace of sin or of the roots of sin will ever be found in this earth again. This is made plain by the prophet Malachi: —

"Behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith Jehovah of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. 4: 1, A. R. V.

There will be nothing left in this world by which such conditions as we now see here can ever come into being again. The prophet Nahum assures us of this in these words: —

"What do ye devise against Jehovah? he will make a full end; affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1: 9, A. R. V.

God thus gives his guaranty to all the universe that this experience with sin will be the only one. The cleansing fires of that great day will remove every stain of evil, every taint of sin, from this world; and the experiences of this life — the cost of sin to heaven and its fearful results to earth — will be so burned into the sensibilities of the redeemed that the very thought of sin will fill them with horror.

When that cleansing work is finished, God will set his hand to the work of beautifying man's everlasting abode. Speaking of that time, the prophet Isaiah says: —

"The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. . . . Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sands shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. . . . The redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35, A. R. V.

Today large portions of great continents are deserts, or are covered with pestilential swamps and wildernesses that form breeding places for myriads of poisonous insects and reptiles and savage beasts. Not so will it be in the home of the redeemed; for "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." Isa. 65:25. Of the permanence of that condition, Jehovah says: —

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain." Isa. 66: 22, A. R. V.

But do the saints not go to heaven? When the Saviour appears in the clouds of heaven, the saints are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," and it is plainly stated in the Word that they shall "ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. They go then to the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare. But they do not always remain in heaven. Says the revelator: —

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. 21: 1-3, A. R. V.

That brings back again to man the forfeited inheritance; but it does more, for it brings God himself into the home of man, fulfilling the scripture which says, "And so shall they ever be with the Lord." The beauty and glory of that restored inheritance are beyond the power of man to conceive. There will be in it nothing hurtful, nothing ugly, nothing unholy. The Word declares: —

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." "In thy presence is fullness of joy." 1 Cor. 2: 9, 10; Ps. 16: 11.

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. 84: 11.

When man sinned, he was denied access to the tree of life, lest he should "eat and live forever," perpetuating sin. But in his home restored there comes back to him again the privilege of partaking of that tree. Christ makes that definite promise to the overcomer in these words: —

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. 2: 7.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Rev. 21: 7.

This is in harmony with that declaration made through the prophet Daniel concerning the restored kingdom: —

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 7: 27.

Though we may not yet know all the beauty and the glory that will be found in the home of the redeemed, God has given us a few glimpses to cheer our hearts while waiting for the restoration. Here is such a glimpse into the capital city of that better land: —

"And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 22: 1-5, A. R. V.

Who can look out of this world, with its sin and strife and sorrow and bloodshed, and look into that better land, with its fairer prospects and sweeter joys and holier associations, and not long for the time to come when the change shall be made? Here we have our disappointments, our sorrows, our heavy griefs, and the constant reminders of the waiting tomb. But none of those things will find any place in the home restored. Instead —

"He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away." Rev. 21: 4, A. R. V.

That is the home of the redeemed. To that, Enoch looked forward out of the wickedness and faithlessness of his time. Abraham saw it when he looked for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Moses saw it in prospect when he viewed the earthly land of promise from the summit of Mt. Nebo. David saw it, and sang of it in his songs of the restoration, and recognized his Redeemer in the Shiloh who was to come. Daniel saw it in prophetic vision in the fifth kingdom that was to bear rule over all the earth when the dominion should be restored. It has been the hope of the faithful in every age. It has comforted the oppressed, cheered the downtrodden, and consoled the martyr; and we are drawing near to the time when its blessed reality will be experienced by every soul who has proved faithful to God. In place of distress, it brings comfort; in place of sorrow, joy; in place of weeping, gladness; in place of bereavement, the reunion of loved ones; in place of poverty, eternal riches; in place of a transient abode, a home that is ours forever; in place of death, everlasting life.

To such a home we look forward with fondest anticipation. What has this earth to offer that can compare with the blessed satisfaction which that better land affords? What is there here that should entice us to throw

that away? When we realize what this earth is and what we are, and what that earth will be and what we may be, our prayer should be, "Lord, make me thy child;" and then, "Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly."

A Glorious Climax of the Plan of Salvation

The second coming of Christ is to be the glorious climax and completion of the plan of salvation — the event which constitutes the best of all promises, and the substance of the Christian's hope.

Then shall the elect be gathered, and bid a long farewell to all the ills of this mortal life. How rich in all that is precious to the Christian is this promise! Wandering an exile in this evil world, separated from the few of like precious faith, he longs for the companionship of the righteous, the communion of saints. Here he shall obtain it: for all the good shall be gathered, not from one land only, but from all lands; not from one age only, but from all ages,— the great harvest of all the good, coming up in long and glorious procession, while angels shout the harvest home, and the timbrels of heaven sound forth in joyous concert; and a song before unheard, unknown, in the universe, the song of the redeemed, shall add its marvelous notes of rapture and melody to the universal jubilee. So shall the saints be gathered, to be joyful in one another's presence forever and ever,—

> "While the glory of God, like a molten sea,
> Bathes the immortal company."

This gathering has nothing in it but that which is desirable. The saints can but sigh and pray for it. Like Job, they cry out for the presence of God. Like David, they cannot be satisfied till they awake in his likeness. In this mortal condition we "groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon." We can but be "upon tiptoe" for "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Our eyes are open for its vi-

sions, our ears are waiting to catch the sounds of the heavenly music, and our hearts are beating in anticipation of its infinite joy. Our appetites are growing sharp for the marriage supper. We cry out for the living God, and long to come into his presence. No news more welcome than the announcement that the command has gone forth from the Lord to his angels, Gather together unto me my elect from the four winds of heaven.

The Goodly Land

I see there a land which stands in a wonderful contrast to this. As the hymn says,—

> "O, how unlike the present world
> Will be the one to come!"

I see fields smiling in living green, trees majestic in their wealth of verdure, flowers dazzling with their rainbow hues, and on neither field nor tree nor flower do I see the touch of frost, or the pale hand of decay. I see no footprints of the curse, no scars of sin; no pestilence walking in darkness, nor destruction wasting at noonday. I see no forms distorted with pain, nor brows furrowed with anxiety and care. I see no mournful shafts telling where weary forms and sad and broken hearts have gone down into dust and darkness. I see no painful messages passing over that land, telling that a friend, a brother, a fellow laborer, has fallen beneath the cruel stroke of a relentless foe. I see no darkened room where the tide of a precious life is ebbing slowly away. I see no bosoms heaving with anguish, no badges of mourning, no funeral trains, no yawning, insatiate grave. But on the other hand, I see a glorious company who bear bright palms of victory over death and the grave.

I see every eye sparkling with the fullness of the joy that reigns within. I see on every cheek the bloom of eternal youth and everlasting health. I see every limb lithe and strong. I see the lame man leaping as an hart.

I see the blind gazing with rapture on the celestial glory. I see the deaf listening enchanted to the heavenly melody. I see the dumb joining with loud voice in the anthems of praise. I see the mother clasping to her bosom the children she had lost awhile in the land of the enemy, but now recovered forever. I see long-parted friends meet in eternal reunion. I see a river so pure and clear, so charged with every element of refreshment and life, that it is called "the river of life." I see a tree overarching all, so healing in its leaves, so vivifying in its fruits, that it is called "the tree of life." I see a great white throne in whose effulgence there is no need of moon or sun to give us light. I hear a voice saying to that victorious company, "This is your rest forever, and you shall no more be acquainted with grief; for there shall be no more pain or death, and sorrow and mourning have forever fled away." And in all the universe I then see no trace of sin or suffering, but I hear from every world and from every creature a joyous anthem, like the sound of many waters, going up to God; and they say, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

The Place of Gathering

has nothing but attraction. Jesus, the fairest among ten thousand, is there. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Noah, Job, and Daniel, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, the perfection of heavenly society, will be there. Visions of beauty are there; flowers that never fade, streams that never dry, products in a variety that never ends, fruits that never decay, crowns that never dim, harps that know no discord, and all else of which a taste purified from sin and raised to the plane of immortality can form any conception or think desirable, will be there.

We Must Be There

We must bask in the forgiving smiles of God, to whom we have become reconciled, and sin no more; we must have access to that exhaustless fount of vitality, the fruit of the tree of life, and never die; we must repose under the shade of its leaves, which are for the service of the nations, and never again grow weary; we must drink from the life-giving fountain, and thirst nevermore; we must bathe in its silvery spray, and be refreshed; we must walk on its golden sands, and feel that we are no longer exiles; we must exchange the cross for the crown, and feel that the days of our humiliation are ended; we must lay down the staff and take the palm branch, and feel that the journey is done; we must put off the rent garments of our warfare for the white robes of triumph, and feel that the conflict is ended and the victory gained; we must exchange the toil-worn, dusty girdle of our pilgrimage for the glorious vesture of immortality, and feel that sin and the curse can nevermore pollute us. O day of rest and triumph and every good, delay not thy dawning! Let the angels at once be sent to gather the elect. Let the promise be fulfilled which bears in its train these matchless glories.

"EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS."

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